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REFUGEES.

BY H. M. B.

But yesterday the sweet white violet
'Midst the gnarled oak roots hopefully peeped forth;
The red buds dreamed that they might soon forget
The lashing storm-winds of the icy north.

The mothers of the flock their lambkins led
Into the fragrant meadow lands to play,
And the broad river down its reedy bed
Flashed, singing of the Spring—but yesterday.

But yesterday our hopes were also bright,
Our flowery meadows tempted us to stray
From the straight path, to which in sore affright
some sweeping storm has brought us back to day.

But oh, sad hearts, o'er which the wild winds sweep,
Love's tender voice is calling through the gloom,
And the Good Shepherd, mindful of His sheep,
Despite the blinding storm will guide ye home!

AFTER LONG YEARS

BY THE AUTHOR OF "GLORY'S LOVERS," "AN ARCH-IMPOSTOR," "HUSHED UP!" "A LOVER FROM OVER THE SEA," ETC

CHAPTER VIII.

GERALD went round the end of the house in search of the stables. He quite understood the Sapleys' antagonism to him.

A man you have knocked down doesn't generally love you; but Gerald was not much concerned, and felt that he could hold his own against both father and son, especially if Miss Sartoris stood his friend, as she had done this morning.

How lovely she looked in her plain white frock—and how proud and reserved! He thought of Diana and several other goddesses, then pulled himself up short.

"What you have to do, my friend, is to restore the wing of Court Regna, not moon about the beauty of its mistress!"

On his way to the stables he came upon a tiny cottage. It was quite a surprise to him, for it was almost hidden in a little shrubbery. It stood in a miniature garden all aglow with flowers, and was so pretty an object that Gerald, artist like, stopped to admire it.

As he did so, a little girl, leading an old woman by the hand, came out. At sight of Gerald they paused on the threshold, the girl bobbed a curtesy, and the old woman, screening her eyes with a trembling hand, peered at Gerald for a moment, then curtseyed, and murmured something inaudible.

"I don't know, granny, it's a stranger," said the girl, shyly.

Gerald raised his hat, and seeing that they were making for a rustic seat, drew it forward into the sun for them. The girl thanked him with downcast eyes, and the old lady watched him intently, and her lips moved again.

"Thank you, my lord," she said, in a thin voice.

"You are quite welcome," said Gerald, gently, with the air of reverence for her sex and age which the true man always displays. "But I'm afraid you mistake me for someone else; I am not a lord—worse luck!"

The old woman listened intently, and a smile flickered over her face—an eager, wistful smile, which touched Gerald.

"Your lordship is very kind," she quavered. "I trust her ladyship is well; I have not seen her of late."

"Whom does she take me for?" Gerald asked of the girl.

"I—I don't quite know, sir," she replied, shyly. "She—she is very old, and often doesn't quite know what she says."

Gerald nodded, and, raising his hat again, with his pleasant smile, passed on.

One of the pensioners of the Court; an old servant, no doubt, he thought.

He went into the stable yard, and inquired of one of the men for a ladder. He was grooming a horse, and touched his hat respectfully as he answered.

"There's one at the back of the yard, sir; I'll get it."

"No, no!" said Gerald. "I'll get it. Don't leave your horse; they hate being left in the middle of their toilet."

"So they do, sir, so they do!" said the man, with no abatement of his respect. "It isn't every gentleman that understands that."

"I've had a great deal to do with horses," said Gerald. "That's a good mare."

The man beamed with pleasure. "It's Miss Sartoris's," he said. "Yes, she's almost human, as you may say, sir. Miss Sartoris pets her, and horses are quick to catch at kindness, ain't they, sir? I'll get the ladder for you, almost in a minute."

"No; you go on, I'll manage," said Gerald. He found the ladder, and, though it was a good weight, got it on his shoulder and set off with it. The man eyed him with approval.

"That's a gentleman, anyhow, Bess, for all he ain't above carrying a ladder," he remarked to the mare, and she pricked up her ears and tossed her head in assent.

Gerald carried his ladder round to the front of the wing and mounted to the roof. As he had expected, he found it in a very bad condition.

It would all have to come down. He stood with one foot on the parapet, looking at the view, not knowing that Claire and Mrs. Lexton were looking at his tall, stalwart figure standing out against the background of the blue sky.

When he came down again, he set to work taking measurements, and then, feeling in the vein, took his pipe and seating himself on the grass, made a rough, experimental sketch or two.

Fortunately for him he was an artist as well as an architect—the two things don't always go together, alas!—and he had caught the spirit of the old building. He sketched rapidly, and with an intense eagerness, now and again jumping up to take a measurement or to get a different view.

In his mind's eye he saw the old wing, not only restored, but improved. He would throw out square windows in the Elizabethan style, with stained glass in the top of the latticed windows; there should be a carved stone porch, with a griffin, or some other heraldic animal, at either side, and seats within.

He pictured to himself Miss Sartoris resting there, with the sunlight falling on her through the leaves of the ivy, which, of course, should trail over the porch, and—he started, for Claire's voice suddenly woke him from the dream in which he had been so absorbed that he had not heard or seen her and Mrs. Lexton's approach.

He rose and slipped his pipe in his pocket—at the imminent risk of a conflagration.

"Are you here still?" asked Claire. It did not sound very hospitable, but he understood. "Mary, this is Mr. Wayre."

Gerald raised his hat and bowed, and he and Mrs. Lexton looked at each other, and Mrs. Lexton was at once favorably impressed. He looked at his watch.

"Four o'clock!" he said "I had no idea it was so late! Time passes very quickly when one is at pleasant work."

"And have you had no lunch?" asked Claire, with a little touch of self reproach.

He laughed. "No; but I can't have needed it, as I didn't think of it. Tobacco is a very good substitute, Miss Sartoris."

"We ought to have thought of it, Mary," said Claire, looking at Mrs. Lexton as if it were her fault. "I will send you out something at once; or would you rather come into the house?"

"Please don't trouble," he said. "To tell the truth, I don't care to break off just now. I'm in the humor."

"And we interrupted you," said Claire, gravely.

"No, no," he said, quietly. "Not in the very least. Please don't go, that is, if you want to stay. I mean——"

As was always the way, Claire's self-possession increased as his diminished.

"Have you been making some sketches?" she asked.

"Yes; but they are only sketches, not finished drawings, of course."

Claire smiled. "Oh, we won't ask to see them."

"You may see them," he said, extending them to her. She did not take them up but went up beside him and looked at them.

"How beautiful!" exclaimed Mrs. Lexton, from the other side. "And how quickly you have done them."

"They are just impressions," he said. "Memoranda, so to speak. I may alter them altogether, later on."

Claire had not expressed any opinion as yet, and he glanced at her expectantly.

"The new part will be finer than the old," she said, looking from the drawings to the house.

Gerald felt a glow of satisfaction.

"I shan't alter it then, much," he said, decisively. "I am glad you are pleased, Miss Sartoris; and I hope that you will like the finished plans."

"May I look at them again?" she said,

"Certainly; I am afraid they are very grimy as well as rough, for I have been climbing about the roof." He glanced at his hands. Claire looked at them also, and noticed that on a shapely finger of the left hand there was a ring.

It was an old-fashioned ring, of the signet kind, with an engraved stone. It had not been on his hand when they were up at the chapel. She only noticed it vaguely, her attention having been attracted by the quaintness of the form of the ring.

She looked at the sketches closely. "This is the outside only," she said, "what will you do with the inside?"

"I haven't seen that yet. It all depends upon the other part of the house, I mean the part that adjoins this wing."

"You can go inside now, if you like," she said, "I have the key."

"I should like to," he said.

They went towards the door. A maid crossed the lawn and Claire beckoned to her. "Tell Nichols to send the tea out here, please," she said. "For three."

"This is an excellent idea, Claire," said Mrs. Lexton. "It would have been painful if Mr. Wayre had fallen exhausted before our eyes."

Gerald laughed. "I have gone without food for many more hours than these," he said, lightly. "But a cup of tea will be delightful."

He opened the door and they entered. He was deeply interested, not only in the general aspect of the rooms but in their plan and architecture.

"Oh; these must be saved, if possible!" he said, enthusiastically. "Nothing one could devise could fitly replace them. The stonework is magnificent, and the carvings—well we could put them up again, it's true, but it wouldn't be quite satisfactory. We must save them. That is, I beg your pardon! I am talking as if I were already the accepted architect."

"You are. I have seen the sketches and am satisfied," said Claire.

He inclined his head. "Better wait until the plan is finished; Mr. Sapley may also then be satisfied!"

"Mr. Sapley?" Claire began, laconically; then she stopped. "We had better go up stairs. You will not be frightened with Mr. Wayre to protect you, Mary?"

"That isn't fair, Claire! You were just as frightened as I was! We were in the room the other day, and Miss Sartoris was telling me that it was haunted, when we heard a noise behind that door and someone entered. It was only Mr. Sapley, but we were both scared for a moment; and I think he was as much startled as we were."

"It only wants a real, well authenticated ghost to make it perfect," said Gerald. "This room has been occupied lately," he remarked, his quick eye noticing, as they had, the comparative freshness of the room. "It would make a delightful sitting room or library. It is not often used, of course?"

"Not at all, that I am aware of," said Claire.

"It would make an admirable room for Mr. Wayre to use while he was at work," remarked Mrs. Lexton.

"Oh, I can work in the open air, thank you," he said.

"It rains here sometimes," said Claire, quietly. "You had better accept Mrs. Lexton's suggestion."

It was not for him to bandy words with his employer. He bowed. "Very good, and thank you very much." He glanced gratefully at Mrs. Lexton. "I may take that old bureau into the light of the window?"

"You may arrange the furniture as you please, of course," said Claire.

With the impulsiveness of his nature, he went to the bureau and half dragged, half carried it to the window. "By the way, there may be some papers in it," he said, as he looked at it.

"They will not be of any consequence, I should think," said Claire. "You can keep them together and lock them up in one of the drawers."

"Very well." He brushed the dust from his hands, then stopped suddenly and looked at them and round him with a kind of great anxiety.

"What is the matter? Have you hurt your hand?" asked Mrs. Lexton.

"No, no," he said. "I have dropped my ring—somewhere."

"You had it on just now, outside," said Claire.

"I know," he said. "Please don't trouble," for of course they were looking round for it. "I shall find it somewhere about the rooms. I don't generally wear it, for it is too large for me; I came across it this morning when I was getting my instruments together and I slipped it on."

"Is it a valuable one?" asked Mrs. Lexton, peering round her.

"No," he said, "but I should be sorry to lose it. I have had it all my life, and carried it safely in strange places and through strange scenes. But I am sure to find it; I beg you won't trouble!"

"Oh, we must find it!" said Mrs. Lexton. "It is dreadful to lose a family relic, as I imagine this is."

"I don't know," he said, simply. "I have always had it. It was given to me by the woman who took charge of me when I was a lad. I don't know that it belonged to anyone belonging to me!"

Claire had said nothing, but had paced to and fro slowly, her eyes bent on the ground, and even in that moment he noticed how exquisite a picture she made, moving with infinite grace through the antique room. Suddenly she stooped and picked up the ring.

"There it is," she said, holding it out to him.

"Oh, thank you! Thank you!" he said, gratefully, as he took it from her, and placed it on his finger.

"You should have kept it until a reward was offered, Claire," said Mrs. Lexton, laughingly.

"Had you not better put it into your pocket; you may lose it again?" said Claire, gravely.

He put it into his pocket at once. If she had said, "Had you not better hang it round your neck by a string?" he would have obeyed.

"If we rebuild the interior, we must take care of these panels," he said, indicating the oak that covered the walls.

"They could be put up again just as they are, for they are in capital condition; at least, nearly all of them. Some of them are rather shaky." He went round the room tapping the dark, worm eaten oak. "They did their work thoroughly in those days," he said; "these are as firm as the day they were put up."

As he spoke he struck one of the panels with the soft side of his closed hand, and, as if in mockery of his assertion, a panel, just above his head sprang loose, and hung by a nail on the wall.

Mrs. Lexton laughed.

"You were too flattering, Mr. Wayre," she said. "They did not build as strongly——" She stopped in mid-sentence. "Why, what is that behind the panel?" she asked, timidly.

Claire and Gerald had already seen it. It was a portrait of a lady.

"That is strange!" he said. "Did you not know it was there, Miss Sartoris?"

"No," said Claire, not taking her eyes from the picture.

It was the portrait of a young woman, the face one of extreme beauty, but of a type unlike that of the family pictures in the hall.

Gerald got a chair, and wiped the dust from the painting.

"One can see it better now," he said; and, unconsciously, his voice grew lower. "It is a very beautiful face. Do you know who it is, Miss Sartoris?"

Claire shook her head. She seemed unable to withdraw her eyes from the picture.

"No. I do not think it is a Wharton. It is not like any of them."

"I wonder why it was hidden in this way?" Mrs. Lexton said, in almost an awed voice. "We seem fated to meet with the mysterious in this room, Claire."

"It is not an old painting," said Gerald, who had been examining it, "though it is painted in the Georgian manner. There is something Joshua Reynoldish about it."

He touched the canvas reverently with his forefinger.

"I know nothing of it," said Claire.

"Who used this room?" asked Gerald.

"Lord Wharton, if anyone," she replied. "The rooms adjoining this—the modern rooms, I mean—were sometimes used by him."

"Do you think he covered it up?" asked Mrs. Lexton, in a low voice.

"The hand that placed that hand over it was not the hand of a professional carpenter," said Gerald, absently, as he stood looking at the portrait.

"You are interested in it, Mr. Wayre?" said Mrs. Lexton.

He started slightly.

"Yes, naturally," he said. "It is rather a mysterious find. It is well painted, and it is a pity it has been neglected. There are mould spots—you see? It ought to be carefully cleaned."

"I will send it to London," said Claire.

"It is not necessary to do that, if you will entrust it to me, Miss Sartoris," he said.

"Thank you," she said, simply.

"We may find out something about it, Claire," remarked Mrs. Lexton.

Claire looked down silently, and Gerald understood her feelings in an instant.

"Lord Wharton would like his secret kept—if it was his," he said. "We could replace the picture as we found it—if you wished, Miss Sartoris," he added, as he took the picture from its place, and stood it with its face to the wall.

Claire had moved to the window.

"Yes; tea is ready," she said. "Let us go down. There is the key, Mr. Wayre."

She handed him the key quite naturally, and Gerald's face flushed at this fresh proof of her calm confidence.

The servants had set the tea on a table under a tree, and it looked particularly inviting to Gerald, who was beginning to discover that he was hungry.

"I must wash my hands," he said. "No, thank you, I won't go into the house; there is a pump in the stable."

Mrs. Lexton looked after him with an approving smile.

"I think you have discovered a treasure, Claire," she said, in her kind fashion.

Claire looked into the teapot before answering.

"Yes? Mr. Sapley does not think so," she said.

"I daresay not," said Mrs. Lexton. "Mr. Sapley did not find him! How I do dislike the look of that old man, Claire. And how handsome he is!"

"Mr. Sapley?"

Mrs. Lexton laughed.

"How impassive you are, Claire! You are quite right to be. Of course, he is only a kind of servant, and you are his employer; but I must say that he never for a moment seems to forget it. Nothing could be nicer than his manner."

Gerald, with his nice manner, came back at this moment, and Claire gave him a cup of tea. There was no chair for him, and, after handing round the bread and butter, he sat down on the grass.

"You must be famished, Mr. Wayre," said Mrs. Lexton.

"Not famished, only hungry," he said, laughing. Claire extended a cake.

"You shall have all that and the toast," she said. Gerald leant on his elbow and looked at the two ladies, and round about him, with his happiness quite plainly portrayed in his countenance.

"They used to say in the bush that I had the demon's own luck, and I begin to think that I have," he thought. "If anyone had told me, three days ago, that I should be sitting here drinking tea with the mistress of Court Regna, and engaged as her architect, I should have laughed him to scorn."

He turned over his sketches. "I shall work at these to-night," he said, almost to himself. "Fortunately, there is a good lamp at the inn."

"You are staying at the Hawkers'?" said Claire.

"Yes," he said; "they are comfortable diggings, the captain is a remarkably pleasant old man, and the cooking is an agreeable surprise, while Miss Lucy makes a model waiting maid, and is attention itself. I have fallen in clover."

Claire glanced at him, then looked straight before her thoughtfully. He had spoken Lucy's name quite naturally, and without the least hesitation. Why had the girl blushed and been so confused when she referred to her lodger?

"There are some very interesting characters amongst the fisher-folk in Regna," Gerald went on. "I fancy an author would find them worth studying. Oh, by the way, speaking of characters, I have just seen an extremely interesting old lady. She came out of a tiny cottage round there. She was in charge of a little girl, and they were sitting in the garden, like two figures out of an Academy picture. A most delightful old lady, with snow white hair and a shrewd old face!"

"You must mean Mrs. Burdon—Nurse Burdon, as she is always called."

"Yes," he said. "She is an old servant, I suppose?"

"Yes," said Claire. "She was Lord Wharton's nurse."

"She must be very old, Claire," remarked Mrs. Lexton.

"She is old; very, very old. No one knows her age. I am not sure that she knows it herself. She is a wonderful old woman in her way, and was, until lately, in possession of all her faculties."

"You must take me to see her very soon, Claire."

"Yes, I often go and sit with her, and though she does not recognize everyone, she always remembers me. Her mind wanders sometimes; she has bad and good days."

"This must be one of her bad days," said Gerald, half absently.

"Why?" asked Claire.

"Oh——" He hesitated a moment, then he went on, with a smile. "She addressed me as 'my lord,' when she saw me, and asked after 'her ladyship.' It is the first time I have been mistaken for a member of the peerage, and I was rather astonished."

Claire smiled.

"That is strange," she said.

"Very, very strange," he said.

"I meant that she should have conferred a title of nobility upon you. She does not often make mistakes of this kind. I wonder for whom she mistook you?"

Gerald shook his head.

"I may bear some slight—very slight—resemblance to some nobleman in the locality," he suggested.

Claire thought for a moment.

"There is only Lord Chester," she said, "and he is an old man."

"Should you like to be a peer, Mr. Wayre?" asked Mrs. Lexton, in her soft voice.

"I would rather be Gerald Wayre, the architect of the new wing at Court Regna," he said.

The moment the words had left his lips he regretted them, for though Miss Sartoris' face had shown no resentment, he feared she might think the response presumptuous. He changed the subject with some skill, and presently rose.

"I will take my sketches home and get to work, Miss Sartoris. Good-afternoon, and thank you very much."

There was a moment or two of silence after he had gone, then Mrs. Lexton remarked—

"How well he said that."

"What?" asked Claire, absently.

"That he would rather be himself and rebuild the wing, than a lord!"

Claire looked straight before her.

"It was rather a foolish speech," she said, quietly.

When Gerald had reached the stables he remembered the ladder. He pulled up with a slight feeling of annoyance.

It would not do to leave the ladder stuck up against the house, for, though burglars might be rare at Regna, the thing was a temptation to the serious as well as to the dishonest. He did not like to go back, and yet he could not allow the ladder to remain there.

"What nonsense!" he said, jeering at himself for his reluctance. "Miss Sartoris will not notice my return any more than she would that of any other workman about the place!"

But he was relieved when he got back to find that the ladies had gone.

He shouldered the ladder and was returning with it, when he saw Claire and Mrs. Lexton standing in the cottage garden beside Mrs. Burdon and the little girl. He intended to walk past them without any sign, but as he came up to the group, the old lady dropped a curtesy and quavered out—

"Good morning, my lord!"

He could scarcely let the quaint salutation go without any response, and so he smiled and nodded.

Claire laid her hand on the woman's arm which she had drawn within her own. "You do not know that gentleman, nurse?" she said.

The old woman looked up at her with a shrewd, half secretive expression in the faded dim eyes.

"Yes, yes!" she said, in her thin voice. "I know him well enough, and so do you, my lady!"

Claire changed color for a moment, then she said, gently and with a smile. "And now you don't know me! I am Claire Sartoris, and your little girl, as you used to call me."

"I know, I know!" crooned Mrs. Burdon, nodding her head and half closing her eyes, as if she were sharing a jest with Claire.

"And that gentleman is Mr. Wayre," said Claire.

"Yes, yes! quite right;" said the old woman. "Quite right, my lady. I know his lordship as well as I know you! Why do you plague me so?" she broke off suddenly with the fretful resentment of extreme old age.

The ivory of Claire's face grew rose tinted and Gerald hastened to her relief.

"It is of no use, Miss Sartoris!" he said. "Mrs. Burdon insists upon my nobility—even with a ladder on my shoulder," and with a laugh he hurried on.

CHAPTER IX.

GERALD went to work at his plans that same evening. The lamp, as he had said, was large; it was also hot, but he did not realize how warm the little room had become until he felt the perspiration starting out on his forehead. Then he rose with a laugh, and, lighting his pipe, strolled out for a stretch and a breath of fresh air.

It was a lovely night, with a delightful breeze from the sea; and he sauntered down the steep, roughly-paved path to the jetty.

He was quite absorbed in his work, and looked at the beautiful seascape absently enough. Presently he became conscious of the figure of a young girl walking along the beach and close to the cliffs, which rose perpendicularly from the very edge of the sea line.

As the moon emerged from the bank of cloud he say that the girl was Lucy Hawker. He was thinking, absently and casually, that it was rather strange for her to be walking alone at that time of night; but, concluding that she was tempted by the beauty of the evening, he was turning away, when he saw another figure come down the path and join her.

It was a young man this time, and Gerald fancied he bore some resemblance in form and bearing to Mr. Mordaunt Sapley; but he was too far off for Gerald to identify him, and, while he was looking, the two figures disappeared round a bend of the cliff.

Gerald was just at that moment trying to decide upon a knotty question in connection with the plan, and forgot all about Lucy and her companion directly they passed from his sight. He solved the problem in about half an hour, and, relighting his pipe, started to return to his plans.

There was another road, a mere track, leading direct from the beach, and he decided to take it for a change, and was climbing up the steep path, when Lucy dropped in front of him from the overhanging rock.

"Miss Lucy!" he said.

She started, and uttered a faint cry of surprise and alarm, and stood looking at him for a moment or two with wide-open eyes; then glanced simply over her shoulder.

"You startled me, sir!" she said.

"I am very sorry," said Gerald. "Where did you spring—or, rather, drop—from? I thought for a moment that it was a ghost. Is there a path up there?"

"Yes," she replied, looking at him sideways. "It is not often used. I was taking a stroll; it is such a fine night."

"So it is," assented Gerald. "Too fine for indoors. I think I saw you down on the beach of the cliff, didn't I?"

She was silent for a moment; then she said, with a forced laugh:—

"I dare say, sir; I was down there."

"And not alone?" said Gerald, with a faint smile.

"Oh, yes!" she said; "I was alone——"

"That's strange," said Gerald. "I was sure——"

Then he stopped. It was scarcely fair to make any remark upon the girl's movements.

"At least, almost all the time," she said. "One of the fishermen spoke to me; perhaps it was him you saw?"

Gerald accepted the explanation unsuspectingly. After all, it was extremely improbable that Lucy; who seemed always so truthful and modest, should volunteer falsehood. He must have been mistaken in thinking the man like Mordaunt Sapley.

"I suppose this is good fishing weather?" he remarked.

She assented, and they talked about the fishing as they walked up the path side by side. Presently he said—

"I hope the lamp is full of oil, Miss Lucy? I have got a lot of work to do to-night. Perhaps you know that I may be employed at the Court, rebuilding the old wing?"

"I heard you were there, looking at it, sir," she answered. "I am very glad! It is a beautiful old place, the Court, and Miss Claire is a kind young lady."

"You like her?" said Gerald.

"Oh, yes, sir! She has always been good and kind to me. Everybody likes her, though sometimes she seems proud and standoffish; but she is never so with me—leastwise, very seldom." She stifled a sigh at the correction. "I've known her ever since she came here. We were girls together like—though different, of course. I think she is the loveliest young lady I have ever seen," she added, warmly.

Gerald felt as if he should like to shake hands with Miss Lucy on the spot; but he wisely made no response.

"This is a lonely path," he remarked, after a pause. "But I suppose you don't mind being out alone?"

"No; I'm used to it, sir," she said, simply. "Very few people come along here; only the coastguard and a fisherman now and then."

"And here comes one of them," said Gerald, as a man came slowly down upon them.

The path was narrow, and he drew aside to allow the man to pass and, as he did so, he peered at them curiously, and then touched his sou-wester, and gave them "good night."

"It's Jenks, the coastguard," said Lucy, when the man had passed on.

But after he had gone a few paces, he stopped and came back to them.

"Beggin' your pardon, sir," he said,

civilly, with another touch of his cap, "but could you oblige me with a pipe o' bacca? I've run out, and——"

"Certainly," said Gerald; and he opened his pouch and emptied the contents into the man's horny hand.

"Oh, I won't take all, sir," he said.

"I've half a pound at home," said Gerald; "you're welcome to this."

"Thank you, sir. Mr. Wayre, beant it?"

"Right the first time," assented Gerald, pleasantly. "Good night."

"He is always asking for tobacco," said Lucy, with a smile.

"I can sympathize with him," said Gerald. "It must be lonely work pacing the cliffs all night, and a pipe's company. Well, here we are! Good night, Miss Lucy."

She had stopped a few yards from the cottage, and looked at it hesitatingly, and she responded to his good-night in a low voice, and melted away from his side like a shadow.

"So Miss Lucy's sweetheart is a fisherman?" he said to himself. "Well, I wish her luck!"

He worked late into the night, and the next morning, after breakfast, went up to the Court.

He had brought some necessary tools and materials with him, and thinking that it would be as well to take them to the room Miss Sartoris had so kindly lent him, he unlocked the door and went upstairs.

To his surprise, a maid was hard at work, dusting and cleaning up generally.

"You need not go," he said, as with a curtsey she made as if to retreat. "I only want to put these things on the bureau."

"Yes, sir. You can put them inside, if you like," she said, respectfully. "The drawers are cleared out. Mr. Sapley was here quite early this morning, and did it."

"That was very kind of him," said Gerald. "I shall be glad of the drawers."

"Shall I leave the picture here, sir? It looks rather untidy like."

She looked at the portrait standing against the wall where Gerald had placed it.

"Yes, please," he said; and he took it up and looked at it for a moment or two.

The sweet face seemed to have something pathetic in it, which he had not noticed on the previous day, and he sighed as he placed it against the bureau, intending to take it home and clean it up that evening.

"The room looks quite bright and cheerful," he said. "I see you have put up some fresh curtains to the window, Susan."

"Yes, sir; Miss Sartoris said I was to, and to light a fire if you thought it at all damp. My name's Emily, if you please, sir."

"I beg your pardon," said Gerald. "Emily's a prettier name than Susan. It is very kind of Miss Sartoris. Never mind the fire; the sun is coming in through the window, and will dry the room out very nicely."

He went outside, and fell to work; but, engrossing as his work was, he reflected every now and then on Miss Sartori's thoughtfulness and kindness. It also struck him that Mr. Sapley had been very prompt in clearing out the bureau. "But he is within his right to distrust a man who can't give any sort of references," he thought.

During the morning he caught himself wondering whether Miss Sartoris or Mrs. Lexton would visit that part of the grounds; but the morning passed, and they did not appear.

He had brought some sandwiches with him, so that he might have a good reason for refusing an invitation to lunch—he would guard himself against intruding himself upon Miss Sartoris—and was munching one as he walked up and down with his measuring rod in his hand, when he heard the roll of a carriage, and saw a landau and a splendid pair of horses driving down the road towards the house. The two ladies were inside, and he raised his hat and turned away immediately.

"There is Mr. Wayre," said Mrs. Lexton. "How busy he looks! Shall we go and see how he is getting on, Claire?"

"Perhaps we should not interrupt him," said Claire.

"Perhaps so; but I don't think he would mind," said Mrs. Lexton.

Claire did not respond, and they went into the house. It seemed, however, that she had not forgotten his presence, for when the tea came in she told the footman to take some out to Mr. Wayre.

Gerald saw him coming across the lawn with a daintily laid silver salver, with a slight feeling of disappointment. Perhaps Miss Sartoris would come out later on?

But the afternoon passed without a visit from her, and he finished for the day and went home, feeling as if something were wanted to complete his satisfaction.

The next morning, while he was at work outside, Mr. Sapley came up. Gerald had expected to find him anything but amiable, but, to his surprise, Mr. Sapley was quite civil, and appeared, indeed, bent upon making himself agreeable.

"I see you are getting on, Mr. Wayre," he remarked, glancing under his brows at the sketches and plans lying on the grass. "I hope you find it interesting. Have you got everything you want?"

Gerald replied in the affirmative, and thanked him.

"You must let me know if you haven't," said Mr. Sapley. "Perhaps you would like an extra table, or something, put up in the room you're using?"

"No, thank you," said Gerald. "I have all I want in the table already there."

"Ah, yes," said Mr. Sapley. "By the way, I cleared out that old bureau for it might be useful. There were only some old papers there, nothing of consequence, but I thought you might want the drawers empty."

Gerald said they would be very useful, and as a return for Mr. Sapley's civility, showed him the rough sketches of the plans.

Mr. Sapley's eyebrows went up, and his loose lips drew together.

"Pretty elaborate!" he said. "There will be a rare lot of work here, and it will cost something!"

"It is rather elaborate," Gerald admitted. "But—well, I didn't think the cost was of much consequence," he added frankly.

Mr. Sapley shot a glance at him.

"No, no," he said, rather hastily, "just so, I don't know what it matters—" He paused and rubbed his chin. "It's a matter for Miss Sartoris, of course. Fine day, Mr. Wayre," and with a contortion of his face which was intended for a smile he went off.

Miss Sartoris did not come near the old wing that day. But Gerald saw her walking on the terrace, and he paused once or twice in his work to glance at the graceful figure with a curious wistfulness.

Had he offended her? Perhaps she resented the foolish speech he had made just before leaving them? He walked home that evening rather thoughtfully, but flung his moodiness from him as he sat down to his plans.

He finished them that night, and as he leant back in his chair felt that they were, at any rate, "not bad." The next day he packed them carefully and sent them to Miss Sartoris and immediately fell a prey to the Demon Suspense.

Claire was at home when they arrived, and she carried the parcel to her own room to open it. The plans were well drawn, and Gerald had spent a great deal of pains finishing that of the front of the wing.

It was, in fact, a remarkable pretty bit of water color, and Claire gazed at it admiringly.

"How clever he is!" she caught herself murmuring. There was no question about her liking the plan; it seemed to her just perfect. Mr. Sapley was in the library, and she went straight downstairs to him. He rose and glanced at the roll she held in her hand.

"These are Mr. Wayre's plans," she said. "Will you look at them, please."

He laid them out on the table and studied them for some time in silence, and, to her surprise, he said, at last:

"Very good; very good, indeed."

"I am glad you approve of them," said Claire; "for I like them very much."

"Yes, they are very good," he said. "I don't know that you could have anything better."

"I am quite satisfied with them," said Claire.

"Then I suppose the work had better be got on with, Miss Sartoris?" he said. Claire assented.

"Yes," he said, musingly; then he stole a glance at her. "It will cost a large sum of money," he remarked, in almost the same tone he had used when speaking of Gerald.

"Yes, I suppose so," said Claire; "but it is better to have the thing well done, is it not?"

"Quite so, quite so;" he assented. "I will advertise for tenders at once."

"Can not someone on the estate do it?" asked Claire. "I would rather employ one of our own people."

He bowed.

"Very good. Whoever undertakes it must satisfy Mr. Wayre of his capacity to carry out the work," he said.

Claire was surprised again.

"Thank you, I had forgotten that. Mr. Wayre will be glad that you approve of the plans," she added.

He lowered his eyes.

"Oh, if they satisfy you, Miss Sartoris," he said. He took up a slip of paper which accompanied the drawings. "I see Mr. Wayre has given us an idea of the cost. I mentioned it to him yesterday." He raised his brows as he handed the paper to her. "It is a large sum!"

Claire looked at the paper. There was only a line or two, and her attention was bestowed upon the firm, clear handwriting rather than on the amount suggested.

"Yes," she said, absently. The writing seemed to her characteristic of Mr. Wayre.

"Yes," said Mr. Sapley, rubbing his chin. "I don't know that we can meet it out of the current account. We shall have to sell some stock."

He spoke in an easy, matter of fact way, and arranged the papers before him in a preoccupied manner.

"Yes," said Claire again, assentingly. Her ignorance of business or her resources was complete, and she did not understand his proposal in the least.

"If a small local man does the work, he will want some money to start with," he went on. "If you wish it commenced at once, perhaps you had better have the money ready."

"It would be better, no doubt," said Claire. "Do not let anything create a delay."

"Just so," he said.

She had moved to the window with the drawing of the front elevation in her hand, and did not see the look he cast at her, a glance of surprise combined with satisfaction.

He seated himself at the table, and, watching her, drew from his capacious pocket-book a paper, and rapidly filled in some blank spaces in the writing upon it.

"If you will sign this, if you please, Miss Sartoris?" he said, when he had finished.

Claire bent down at the table, and, without a glance at the paper, appended her signature.

"Thank you," he said. He did not take the paper up immediately, but left it lying on the table; but a moment or two afterwards he dropped one of the plans on the top of it, completely covering it.

"Shall I write and inform Mr. Wayre his plans are accepted?" he asked, or will you?"

"If you will be kind enough," said Claire, with her hand on the door and her face turned from him.

Mr. Sapley waited until the door had closed on her, then he caught up the hidden paper which she had just signed, and with a grim smile of satisfaction, blotted the signature and carefully replaced the document in his pocket-book, as if it had suddenly become exceedingly precious.

As he was returning the book to his pocket the door opened. Mr. Sapley started, and his hand gripped the lappet of his coat and drew it across his chest as if he were afraid that Miss Sartoris was returning to demand the paper from him. But it was Mordaunt who entered, and Mr. Sapley let his hand fall on the table with a sigh of relief

Mordaunt glanced at the litter of plans and scowled.

"I suppose that mean fellow has got his way with those things?" he said. Mr. Sapley nodded.

"Take care, Maudy!" he said, warningly. "Miss Sartoris has only just left the room."

"I know," said Mordaunt, sullenly. "I saw her through the window as I passed. What was she signing just now?"

Mr. Sapley looked up—he had seated himself at the table again—with a sharp glance of inquiry.

"Signing?" he replied. "Oh, yes, yes. A lease, only a lease!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

APPROPRIATED BY MISTAKE.—It is curious to notice what a difference in meaning the presence or absence of the humble "comma" will make. In a seaport town in the north of England there was a parish clerk who read very badly.

One Sunday morning he was handed a pieces of paper, and from it he read thus—

"Captain Humbly having gone to sea his wife, desires the prayers of the congregation," which elicited many titters and even a few louder explosions among the congregation.

The captain's wife had the reputation of being a bit of a tartar.

DEEP learning will make you acceptable to the learned, but it is only an easy and obliging behavior, and entertaining conversation, that will make you agreeable in all companies.

Bric-a-Brac.

ALMOST INDESTRUCTIBLE.—The cloth made by the ancient Egyptians was so good that, though it had been used thousands of years as wrappings of the mummies, it can still be worn. It is composed entirely of linen, the ancient Egyptians considering wool unclean.

CROWING.—It is a common fact, but not generally remembered, that a cock will not crow unless he can throw back his head. If a cock is shut overnight in a low coop, where he cannot stretch back his neck, there will be no crowing in the morning until the bird is released.

MORE THAN ONE WAY.—The black potentates of the African coast press your middle finger three times as a sign of salutation, the Japanese takes off his slipper, while the Laplander pushes his nose vigorously against yours. In Hindostan it is the custom to salute a man by taking him by the beard, while the people of the Philippine Islands take your hand and rub their faces with it.

SOUND AND DISTANCE.—The roar of a lion can be heard farther than the sound of any other living creature. Next comes the cry of the hyena, and then the hoot of an owl. After these the panther and jackal. The donkey can be heard fifty times farther than the horse, and the cat ten times as far as the dog. Strange as it may seem, the cry of a hare can be heard farther than that of either the dog or cat.

CLOTHING OF PAPER.—The Japanese soldiers are being dressed in paper clothing. The shirts and trousers are all composed of specially prepared paper, of a yellowish color. They are bound with linen binding, and are partly pasted together and partly sewn with a machine. When the clothes, which are very durable, are worn out, they are thrown away and replaced by new ones.

FINGERS AND TOES.—No living representative of the animal kingdom has more than five toes, digits or claws to each foot, hand or limb. The horse is the type of the one-toed creation, the camel of the two-toed, the rhinoceros of the three-toed and the hippopotamus of the four-toed animal life. The elephant, and hundreds of other animals of different orders, belong to the great five toed tribe.

INCREASE AS THEY FALL.—Raindrops always increase in size as they fall. This is occasioned by the accumulation of moisture from the air through which they fall. And this being so, it is evident that their size will depend upon the height of the clouds from which they descend, as well as the rapidity of condensation. Hence we find that tropical rains and Summer showers fall in large, heavy drops, while the fine, drizzling rains, mists and fogs are characteristic of cold latitudes.

INGENIOUS.—A curiously ingenious device is regarded as being sometimes employed by Mongolian letter carriers. These men make very long journeys on foot, and within a time that allows them only the briefest intervals for an occasional nap. They ensure themselves against oversleeping, therefore, by tieing a piece of joss-stick to one of their thumbs, light it and lie down to rest. When the stick burns down to the flesh the pain awakens them, and they resume their journey.

TESTED BY THE TROUSSEAU.—A curious custom prevails among the Roumanians. When a girl is of marriageable age, her trousseau, carefully woven, spun and embroidered at home, is placed in a painted wooden box. A man asking to be allowed to pay his attentions to the girl, is at liberty to open the box, which is convenient, and examine its contents. If satisfied with the quantity and quality of the dower, he makes application for her hand, but if not, he is quite at liberty to retire.

A JAPANESE CRAB.—One of the most singular looking creatures that ever walked the earth or swam the waters under the earth is the world-famous man-faced crab of Japan. Its body is hardly an inch in length, yet the head is fitted with a face which is the perfect counterpart of a Chinese coolie—a veritable missing link, with eyes, nose and mouth all clearly defined. This curious and uncanny creature, besides the great likeness it bears to a human being in the face, is provided with two legs, which seem to grow from the top of its head and hang down over the side of its face. Besides these legs, two feelers, each about an inch in length, grow from the chin of the animal, looking for all the world like a forked beard. These man-faced crabs swarm in the inland seas of Japan.

GLADSOME THINGS.

BY M. E.

The chant of birds in the morning clear,
The fleecy clouds in the radiant blue,
The joyful cry of the first cuckoo,
Telling that spring is here;

The laugh of Childhood, the hum of bees,
The flutter of young birds' wings in June,
The golden lights in the summer noon
Amid the beechen trees;

The song of reapers from fields of corn,
The early snowdrops, the daffodils,
The sunrise tinting the gorsy hills
Upon an April morn;

A ruddy glow in a window pane
Guiding a wanderer's footsteps home,
A white bird skimming the ocean's foam
To meet his mate again;

The church bells pealing o'er vale and mead
In a summer eve on the scented air,
Calling the world for a time to prayer—
These are gladsome things indeed!

A DOUBTED FAITH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A TRYING EXPERIENCE," "BY CROOKED PATHS," "A BURIED CRIME," "OWEN DALE'S ORDEAL."

CHAPTER III.

BUT the fair Fanny was smarting too keenly under the sense of her wrongs to keep her head. She was consumed with a desire to crush this odiously-attractive family; and, since the only advantage she had over them was in the length of her purse, she tried to overpower them with that.

Her next audible remark fell like a small bomb-shell into the midst of the animated conversation going on in the window. She came and planted herself at the tea table opposite to Monica with an aggressively business-like air.

"I should not mind buying that pair of plaques, Miss Golightly, if you will let me have them at the same price you would sell them to your shop people. Understand, I don't mind a bit how much they cost; but I have an objection to paying more than the fair market price for anything."

This time there was a thoroughly-dismayed pause all round; and Conway struggled on to his feet with some nervous idea of starting a very animated leave taking, to cover the wretched woman's hideous blunder.

But Monica was above being ruffled by a thing of that kind. After that startled pause she smiled a very self-possessed and very tolerant smile across at the gorgeously dressed little lady, a smile which somehow made that young person realize, with an exasperating sense of defeat, that, from an immeasurable height above her intellectual level, Miss Golightly was looking down at her and pitying her for her deplorable want of manners.

"At present I have no intention of turning my mother's drawing-room into a china shop, Mrs. Weston," said Monica; and it was said so smoothly and sweetly that it was difficult to understand how the sarcasm made itself felt.

"Have I committed myself very inexcusably, Mrs. Golightly?" Mrs. Weston asked, flushing scarlet, and turning to the quarter where the fighting power was weakest. "I apologize if I have; but I thought my money would be just as good as anybody else's."

"Ah, but it is not, Mrs. Weston!" returned Monica, still with that unruffled smile. "I should not enjoy taking your money at all, after that cruel little remark about 'a fair market price.' If you want the plaques very much, I will let you know when I send them up, and you can buy them of the shopkeeper himself. You will feel sure then that you are not paying more than the fair market price for them, at any rate. If I should ever devise a plan for bleeding my customers exorbitantly, I shall not choose my victims from among my mother's visitors."

"Which," as Conway remarked in relating the story to Farquhar afterwards, "was such a very sufficient Roland for the other one's Oliver, that I felt it unnecessary to add further to the little vulture's setting down. I never saw a woman more done in my life.

* * * * * *

Mrs Weston might repeat her malicious little hints and innuendoes about the Golightly girls as frequently and as busily as she liked; but she could no more prevent their becoming popular in Milchester than she could prevent the sap from rising in the forest trees in spring time.

The fact was that in the family circle at Bethune's Wing there were to be found all the elements of popularity; pretty, bright, amiable girls, with a positive genius for putting people at their ease at once, and with an adorable mother into the bargain.

It was scarcely to be wondered at that, wherever they went, they always had a little cluster of men round them, although they were frequently surpassed in dress by their richer acquaintances; but Christine's fun and unflagging spirits and the good looks of the other two more than held their own against the gorgeous gowns of Mrs. Weston and her own particular set.

For Mrs. Weston had taken up a position of open antagonism towards the newcomers; and it was a generally understood fact those who wished to retain her friendship must not show more than the most ordinary civility to the opposite faction.

Christine and Olive went out a great deal, and they would have gone out even more if the expensive question of suitable clothing had not stood in the way.

Monica went out the least of them all. She herself said that it was because she could employ her time to much better advantage for the family good at her painting; but her mother thought she knew of another reason, and she had many a troubled half hour grieving over the thought that Monny's dainty pride chafed under the many petty shifts and expedients they were put to to make both ends meet.

To Mrs Topham's functions the whole family always went en masse, simply because Mrs. Topham refused to accept any excuses.

"One wants to be so fresh and dainty for a garden-party," said Christine, when that form of gaiety was under discussion.

"We have nothing we could make do, and we could not possibly suggest new gowns. We have just sent for the flannel for new tennis frocks all the way round; and that was a pretty tight squeeze of itself. I think you must leave us out this time, Mrs. Topham."

"No, you shall come in the tennis frocks," answered Mrs. Topham decisively. "I did not mean to have tennis—it takes up too much room—but I certainly will now, and then you will be quite the correct ticket. My dears, don't be absurd!" she went on, when Chris and Olive began to remonstrate against the change of plan on their account.

"I want your help to make the thing go off brightly. If I can't have you—all of you, mind—I shan't trouble to have it at all. I don't think you know your own value as hostesses. I will just have the lot of you, Walford Haynes and all; and you will all come early, before the other people, and brighten us all up from the start."

Well, of course, "when she put it in that way," as Olive said, "there was nothing for it but to give in." Any little thing that they could do in return for her unceasing goodness to them all they were not likely to think twice about.

So the new tennis frocks—white flannel with a black thread at distances of an inch—were cut out. Olive was the cutter, and a period of severe industry set in.

They used the drawing room to work in—being at the back of the house it was safer, and they were able to have all the large windows open to the garden; and on those hot summer days the air was a boon to the busy workers.

They stacked the cushions and knick-knacks out of the way at the farther end of the room, and made their workshop round the big bay-window, where the light was strongest. Here Olive set up her ironing board—to cut out on—and her sewing machine, and, with Chris and her mother, set to work with characteristic energy.

Monica went quietly on with her painting at her bedroom window upstairs. She was very little good at needlework, and it was not worth while sacrificing her earnings for the little help she could give.

By and-by there arose a necessity for extra buttons, and Chris was despatched for them, while the two other workers went steadily on Mrs. Golightly with her botton-holes—a part of the work which always fell to her share—and Olive with her seams, without speaking for quite a long time.

They were getting rather tired, the day was very hot, and the only inveterate chatterer in the family was out. But presently the busy little clatter of the machine stopped, and Olive raised her pretty flushed face and looked at the clock and then at her mother's work.

"I wonder what is keeping Chris so long," she said, pushing the bright curly hair off her forehead with a rather weary air. "You will be at a stand-still for those buttons in a minute, and it will be a pity to waste time while we are in the mood for sticking to it."

"Chris will be back," Mrs. Golightly answered. "You can always depend on her when there is work about. She has had some difficulty to match the buttons, I expect. There she is at the door now! I knew——"

"Hush!" said Olive quickly. "There is some one with her! She is never going to be such a donkey as to bring anybody in here!"

She glanced round the dismantled room as she spoke, and down at her own attire—a well-worn black skirt and a black and white striped cotton jacket with a leather waist-belt—loose and cool for working, but hardly the sort of costume in which to receive afternoon callers.

"Now you must take the vow of secrecy!" Chris was saying out in the hall, and they knew by the sound of laughter in her voice that she was in one of her mad-cap humors. "You must promise that, in no circumstance whatever, will you ever betray to a soul in Milchester the secret of Bethune's Wing."

"We promise!" came the answer in sepulchral tones; and with a little burst of laughter Chris threw open the door, and disclosed Farquhar and Conway, looking very expectant, and loaded with pots of cream and baskets of strawberries.

"Well, I do call that too bad of you, Chris!" cried Olive, laughing, in spite of her vexation, at the look of astonishment on the men's faces. "We're not fit to be seen, Mr. Farquhar; we are up to our eyes dressmaking."

"Dressmaking is it?" he said, enlightened. "But what's the board for, Miss Olive? 'Pon my honor, for a minute I thought it was a sacrificial altar, and that we had interrupted some religious rite! Mrs. Golightly," he went on, passing round the board to shake hands with that lady, while Conway came forward rather deprecatingly to greet Olive—"Mrs. Golightly, we have been lured here on false pretences! Miss Chrissie said you would lend us spoons and plates to eat our strawberries and cream with."

"Chris is a mean little traitor, Mr. Farquhar!" declared Mrs. Golightly. "But, as far as the spoons and plates go, you are welcome to them."

"Not here!" cried Olive, brandishing a huge pair of scissors threateningly above her head, as Farquhar turned to set his strawberry baskets on the ironing board. "Not here, you greedy things! I am boss of the work room, and I won't have strawberry juice about among my work! You must do your feasting outside on the grass; I won't have a spoonful of it inside the room!"

"May we really stay?" asked Conway. "I'm afraid we're awfully in the way, Mrs. Golightly! We will trot directly if you say me must."

"Oh, please let us stay now we're here!" pleaded Farquhar. "We'll bring the garden chairs and tables close up to the window, and we'll go round to the kitchen window and beg the plates and spoons from Judith ourselves. Judith is great friends with me; I'll manage her beautifully, and we won't bother you a bit till the feast is ready."

"You're not really vexed, are you?" said Conway to Olive when Farquhar and Chrissie had gone off to fetch the table.

"Well, I was a little bit," she answered, with a frank smile. "It isn't just nice to be caught at three o'clock in the afternoon in a dressing jacket, with your hair all tousled."

"Is that a dressing-jacket?" he asked, with a look in his eyes which made her suddenly blush in the most absurd manner. "I think it is the loveliest little garment I ever saw! You look like the Irish peasant girls in the Adelphi pieces, only a thousand times more bewitching. I wish you would introduce the fashion of wearing them generally."

"Go and help prepare the strawberries!" she said, laughing to hide her blushes, and yet feeling somehow comforted by the knowledge that he found her attractive, even in her faded cotton jacket. "You are making me waste my time, and I want to get these gowns done by to morrow."

"I shall come and help you presently," he said. "My sister uses a machine for her school children's frocks; I can stitch seams as straight as a crack company's line on a field-day. I've often done it for her on wet days, when there was no other way of killing time. I shall come and do your seams for you presently."

Olive laughed, as if she found the idea funny; but he looked back and nodded significantly at her as he went.

"You will see," he said.

"Come along, Olive!" sang out Christine presently from outside the window. "Leave your work for a few minutes; you will go back all the fresher afterwards."

"Here is your especial little chair," said Farquhar; "and here is Conway waiting with his own especial chair to sit next you. Mrs. Golightly, we have sent Miss Monica's share up-stairs; she said she could not leave her work just now."

"I wish I were like Monny or Olive," remarked Chris, after a time, tilting her chair back and looking up at the blue sky, with her hands behind her head. "When there is work to be done, I really believe they take a pleasure in doing it. Now I don't; and especially I don't when it is such weather as this. I believe summer was sent on purpose to make holiday in."

"Just listen to her," said Olive; "and she is the most determined worker of the lot when she begins!"

"But it always goes against the grain all the same, you know. Oh, how I wish we had been born well off, like Mrs. Weston!"

"But I don't think she was born well off," observed Farquhar in his quietest manner. "Her father has made all his money during the last ten years. He is one of our meat contractors, and he is noted for providing the worst meat eaten in the service; that is how he was able to give 'dear Fanny' such a pot of money."

"Now, Tom!" said Conway in remonstrance.

"Well, you know it is true, my boy!"

"But you shouldn't run her down before Mr. Conway," said Chris good-naturedly.

"Oh, Con has thrown his last lingering touch of allegiance in that quarter overboard, Miss Chrissie!"

"No?"

"Yes—really! Dear Fanny wanted him to go riding with her last Tuesday, and he refused."

"I suppose he had another appointment," said Mrs. Golightly.

"No, that was just the mischief of it—he hadn't. Not a downright appointment, you know!"

"Then why did he refuse?"

"It is just a lot of nonsense, Mrs. Golightly," put in Conway, looking a little inclined to be savage. "Be quiet, can't you, Tom?"

"The fact was," continued Farquhar, a calmly as if there had been no interruption to his reply, "that he thought the usual afternoon's tennis would come off at Mrs. Topham's, and he would not risk losing it. Well, it did not come off, you know; and Mrs. Weston heard that our young friend here was lounging about his quarters the whole afternoon, doing nothing, and she accused him of telling a falsehood to get out of the ride with her. Well, of course he was obliged to explain then that it was on account of the standing engagement with you for tennis, and then I believe the fat was in the fire and no mistake. Con won't say what really did take place, but I believe she asked him to send all the mementoes of their friendship back to her, even to some paper fans he had in his room; and that was particularly awkward, because, as it happens, those very fans——"

"Oh, hang it all, Tom, can't you shut up?" burst in Conway, half laughing, half angry. "Mrs. Golightly can't find my fall out with poor little Mrs. Weston very amusing, I should think!"

"Well, I want to put you girls on your guard, that's all," said Farquhar. "She's as savage as a tigress robbed of her whelps—which is a back-handed way of calling you a whelp, Con—and if she gets a chance of making you feel uncomfortable she won't miss it, I can promise you."

"Wouldn't she like to know we are making our gowns for next Tuesday and what we paid a yard for the stuff?" said Chris. "She would spread it all round. She thinks it is shameful to be poor!"

"I hope you didn't buy it in Milchester," Farquhar said anxiously, "for she will find out all about it. It is awfully pretty!"

"Oh, it is all right for tennis-frocks! Of course it would look absurd for anything else! Mrs. Weston objects to our simple style of dress, you know. I heard her say to Mrs. Robertson the other day that simplicity was only another name for affectation; and Doctor Robertson laughed and said that elaborate gowns were all very well for some people, but that it would be a sin to hide Olive Golightly's prettiness under a heap of milliner's finery. I just felt I should have liked to hug him."

Olive had gone back to her work, and Conway had accompanied her, and was

sitting in front of the little machine with an anxious frown on his face, guiding sleeve-seams through with the greatest care and accuracy.

It was rather a drawback, as Christine remarked sotto voce to Farquhar, that he was not able to start or finish the seams himself; but perhaps it did not strike him in exactly the same light. He might even have thought it a distinct advantage that Olive had to come to his help every three or four minutes to take away the completed piece of work and place the new one.

But, though she laughed immoderately at the fierce resolution he brought to bear on his task, she was obliged to confess she could not have done the stitching better herself; and in spite of his constant need of help she managed to get her fixing and tacking in in between whiles, and the pile of ready stitched sleeves and collars and cuffs rose swiftly and steadily under their combined efforts.

"Talk about Hercules and the distaff!" said Farquhar as he and Christine cleared away the remains of the feast. "By-the-bye, was it Hercules, though? Just look at Con's face! I never saw such a dogged wretch as he is if he sets himself to do a thing. What a handsome couple they'll make, won't they?"

Chris put back the pile of plates she had just lifted from the table and stood looking at him.

"Do you mean," she began, and stopped, with her eyes fixed inquiringly upon his.

"Of cour e I do!" he answered laughingly, with a half glance through the window behind him to see that Mrs. Golightly was not listening; but she was far too amused with Conway's grim determination to have eyes for anything else at the moment. "He is desperately in love with your little sister, and he is a frightfully obstinate beggar, you know."

"Well!" said Chris, and marched off with her pile of plates, too much out of countenance to find words to say.

But Farquhar did not care for letting the subject drop quite so abruptly as all that, and hurried after her round the corner of the house, with the sugar basin as an excuse.

"You have forgotten the sugar, Miss Chrissie," he said, overtaking her; and then added, as he went on with her—"When a fellow is as well off as Con is, it must be a confoundedly pleasant thing to fall in love."

"What has being well off to do with it?" asked Christine. "I should think a man can love as well poor as rich."

"Yes, unluckily," said Farquhar with a disconsolate little laugh, which made Chris turn round on him with sudden fierceness.

"Now don't begin to tell me you are in love too," she cried indignantly, "because you'll disappoint me awfully if you do! Why, only yesterday I was saying to Olive that the best thing about you and Mr. Conway was that you never talked nonsense, and now here you come and bowl over my belief in you both. I give you fair warning that, if you are in love, you and I won't be friends any longer. You must pour your raptures into Mr. Conway's patient ear. I couldn't put up with it at any price!"

"Good gracious, you little fury, I never said I was in love, did I?" he asked, assuming an exaggerated air of injury to cover whatever there might have been of real purpose in his mind. "Why, Chrissie, I never thought you were unsympathetic before."

"No more did I," she said, with a touch of compunction. "But you put me out with that suggestion about Olive. It was a regular wrench when Monica got engaged—she has never seemed quite like one of our own very selves since; and it will be downright awful if Olive goes and does it too. What in the world am I to do?"

"I should 'go and do it' too," he answered, speaking with such a preternatural air of gravity that she burst out laughing.

But she grew grave again directly.

"It is all very well to laugh——"

"I was not laughing, ma'm'selle."

"Well, you were making me laugh."

"That is more my misfortune than my fault, as the guinea pig said when the fox sneered at him for having no tail."

"Really, though, it is no laughing matter," she persisted, "to find oneself in the midst of an outbreak of spoonyism—especially when the epidemic is in your own family. Why, if things go on like this, we shall be wiped out of existence before one can say 'Jack!' I shouldn't wonder if mother took this disease next, and then I shall be out in the cold with never a sheet anchor to hold on to."

"A sheet-anchor?" he repeated anxiously. "How must one act and look to play the part of a sheet-anchor?"

But she did not reply to his fun, but went on and passed her pile of plates in at the kitchen window, and turned back again to return without a word to the back of the house.

"Look here, Chrissie!" he said, stopping her before they came within view of the drawing room windows. "You're not to go worrying yourself about what I said. Girls must get married, you know, at some time or other, especially such jolly good-looking girls as your sisters."

"Yes—I suppose so," she answered soberly; "but it is not any pleasanter to put up with just because it is inevitable. I know it's awfully selfish of me to be thinking of myself, but we have always been so closely bound up together—all of us. There never was a secret nor a separate interest among us—the mum and all—until that prig of a Walford Haynes came sneaking round our dear old Monica! And now the disease has got in among us, and Heaven only knows what calamities will fall upon us before it is got out again!"

Farquhar looked at her a little curiously. There was a suggestion of coming tears in her eyes, and the expression of her whole face was forlorn in the extreme.

"Well," he said comically, "you are the first girl I have ever known who took the question of marriage and giving in marriage in the light of a misfortune. Why, you'll do the same thing yourself some day!"

"Oh, no—I sha'n't!" she retorted, getting snappish again in a moment. "What is there for a man to like in me? I'm not good-looking, nor amiable, nor sweet-tempered, nor clever, nor anything! If this sort of thing goes on any further, I shall do what I've been longing to do for the past three years—go on the stage! My old singing master told me that he knew a manager who would give me an engagement in one of his light opera companies any day I liked."

"Well, I think it is horrible to hear you talk like that, Chrissie! That is one of the last things a girl should take to. I suppose now, if a man told you that he cared for you, it wouldn't be a bit of comfort to you?"

"Not a bit!" she retorted. "What would be the good of his caring for me, you know, unless I cared for him too? And I don't believe I shall ever do that. That is what makes me what you called me just now—unsympathetic. I can't understand that sort of thing at all. It seems to me such an abominable thing for a girl suddenly to put a stranger over her own people, to put even her own mother down to the second place in her affections, to be more particular about pleasing or displeasing a man she has known for six months perhaps than she is about the people she has lived with all her life, who have been good to her ever since she was a helpless creature in her cradle! Putting everything else on one side, it is so horribly ungrateful! Doesn't it ever strike you like that?"

Farquhar laughed and took his eyes from her face, and began to work the tip of his smart patent-leather shoe about among the loose pebbles on the path; he seemed to find her question embarrassing.

"I don't think a girl can judge of that until she has been in love herself," he said lightly. "It is like a blind man who can't understand why people feel so much jollier when the sun is shining. He loses a lot of enjoyment, you know, Chrissie."

"But he is saved a lot of depression, too," she flashed back at him. "If he does not see the sunshine, neither does he see the dark clouds. So, if you are pitying me in the person of your hypothetical blind man, you can save your sympathy for something who has greater need of it."

He laughed again, then stooped to pick up a handful of the pebbles, which he began to throw with extraordinary vigor at some imaginary object on the other side of the garden. She waited a moment or two watching the performance, and then it suddenly occurred to her that it was a most unheard-of thing for him not to have answered her.

"You're not angry with me, are you?" she asked anxiously. "I know I'm as nasty as can be this afternoon, but it is not with you. You can't help it if Olive chooses to make a muff of herself over Mr. Conway, of course; but it is just like me to be spiteful all round when anything puts me out. You're not offended?"

"Not at all. I don't believe you could offend me if you tried. I certainly sha'n't get offended because you don't fall in love with the first man who comes along, like most of the others."

"Well, I must go back to the stitching again," she said, moving forward. "Olive will be calling me a sneak for shirking my share."

"Oh, Con has been taking your place!" he muttered. But he was sorry he had said it when she flashed a hurt reproachful glance round at him.

"Can't you give me some more to do?" Conway was saying, as they came up to the open window.

"He is a regular Oliver Twist!" cried Farquhar laughingly. "You will find it out when you know him as well as I do, Mrs. Golightly. However much you give him, he is always 'asking for more.' Come, Con—we ought to be getting off! We have been here a most unconscionable time. Mrs. Golightly will be tired of us!"

"Well, I like that!" grumbled Conway, getting up and straightening his long legs. "I've only been waiting for you; and at last I have made good use of my time," he added, pointing proudly at the heap of nearly-stitched collars and cuffs.

But Christine could not helping imagining he had spoken with a second meaning; and she saw by Farquhar's quick glance at her that the same idea had occurred to him.

"You have really and truly helped me a great deal," said Olive. "Come and see how well they are done, Chris!"

Chris went rather ungraciously. She was obliged to admit that the stitching was "lovely," and yet she hated having to do it, because she was saying to herself all the time that his success in this trifling matter went to prove the truth of his friends's estimate of his character—"Such a dogged wretch if he sets himself to do anything!"

And he had apparently set himself to stealing sunny-tempered lovable Olive away from the people who, according to Christine's theory, had so much the better right to her.

CHAPTER IV.

"HAVE you seen dear Fanny?" asked Farquhar, in an awe stricken whisper, as he shook hands with Chris and Olive. "She came while I was saying 'How d'ye do' to Mrs. Topham. I only just had time to clear out of her way. She has just the most lovely gown on I ever did see—lilac colored silk, with pea cock's feathers embroidered on it in soft fluffy silks all down one side; and—what do you think? Such a joke! Algernon is on duty, looking as savage as a bear!"

"But why?" inquired Olive. "Why should he be savage? You don't mean because his wife has such a splendid dress on, do you?"

Chris laughed at Farquhar's bothered look; Olive had a way of pulling people up short with her innocent little questions.

"Be quiet, you two," she said, as a fresh chorus of voices was heard through the open windows from the lawn—"here they come! You're right, Mr. Farquhar; it is a lovely gown! Major Denzil is telling her how well she is looking; look at the way she is smiling up at him."

"Denzil hates her like poison," murmured Farquhar; "but he is such a good-natured old chap he can't help being pleasant, it comes as naturally as cream comes to milk."

"The people are coming quickly now," said Olive. "I'm glad. They warm up better when there are plenty of them. Mind, Mr. Farquhar, you are not to suggest tennis to Chris or me; we promised Mrs. Topham we would not play. We are her aides de-camp for the day."

"Yes, we're to go round with the oil-cans and keep the wheels running freely," remarked Chris. "And there is a chance to begin, Olive," she added, as Conway made his appearance, with a strange girl. "I suppose that is his sister—go and make yourself agreeable!"

But Olive did not act on the hint.

"I've not spoken to Mrs Robertson yet," she answered, and went off across the lawn to where her mother was sitting, next to the Doctor's merry little wife, who was already in fits of laughter over some joke between her husband and Major Denzil.

"I suppose Monica is busy inside," said Christine. "I must go and do the polite to the new arrival myself."

"And I suppose I must be civil to the dear Fanny," returned Farquhar; "so I'll go now and get it over. I say, if there is any dancing by-and-by you'll give me the first waltz, won't you?"

She nodded back an assent, and he went on, well pleased, to do his duty.

"Miss Olive, I have been watching my opportunity to pounce on you for the past quarter of an hour," said Conway, stopping her as she hurried across the lawn on some message for Mrs. Robertson. "I want to introduce my sister to you. Let me do your errand, and you come and sit down for a few minutes—you are running yourself off your legs."

"You saw that?" gasped Mrs. Weston to the lady she was talking to—Major Northe's wife.

"No—what was it?"

"I mean the way those Golightly girls are monopolizing Mr. Conway's sister. The ugly one sent him to fetch the fair-haired one to be introduced. They will stalk her for an invitation down to his place in Northamptonshire for the autumn, you'll see."

"Perhaps there won't be much stalking necessary," said the other lady, wondering why Mrs. Weston's voice was so venomous. "They seem to me particularly pleasant girls; just the sort one would like to have in a country house."

Mrs. Weston said nothing, but her face was a study at the moment; and the cloud scarcely lifted until a group of her particular followers came upon the scene, and formed a little court round the superbly-dressed little person.

"Well, now we can have a real talk!" exclaimed Miss Conway to Olive, as her brother was borne off, an unwilling captive, to make up a set at tennis.

"I'm so glad Bob persuaded me to come up for this party. I should have refused Mrs. Topham's invitation if he had not been so very pressing over it; and then I should have missed knowing you! And really there aren't many girls worth knowing, are there now?"

"Well, I have never felt it in that way myself," replied Olive, a little amused, "because, you see, I have my two sisters, and I have never known the want of a companion."

"Ah, how lovely that must be! I wish I had had a sister. There are only Bob and I—and the mater, of course—but she is rather an invalid."

"That must be dreadful! Our mother is almost as much a girl as I am. That is our mother, next to the stout little lady in Indian muslin."

"What—the pretty looking woman with the wavy hair? She is a dear, I am certain!"

"I should think she is!" answered Olive with conviction; and Miss Conway looked suddenly round at her and laughed.

"And you are another!" she said. "Bob was right! He said he knew you and I should get on splendidly together. I can't tell you how glad I am he persuaded me to come! I wonder if your mother would let you come down to us for a month when Bob has his leave. I should so like us to be friends."

There was something in this speech which set Olive blushing beautifully. The other girl saw it and laughed, and called her a little darling; and somehow Olive felt more shy than she had ever felt in her life before, and was glad as a diversion to call out to Farquhar, who was passing, to come and make himself agreeable.

"But I am not agreeable, Miss Olive!" he answered, looking down at her with one of those comical smiles which were so hard to understand. "I am in a very disagreeable state of mind indeed! I've been snuffed out in the most ignominious fashion."

"By whom?" asked Olive.

"Well, by a better man, certainly!" he replied. "But, somehow, even that knowledge is not the comfort it ought to be. Miss Chris and I were chatting most comfortably together when that evilly-disposed old Denzil must needs march up the lion of the day, Colonel Ledbitter, and introduce him to your sister. He knew Captain Golightly slightly out in Egypt, and when he heard the name he asked to be introduced. I never saw Miss Chrissie show so much pleasure at knowing any one. She clean forgot my existence, and marched off with the new men to find Mrs. Golightly. I am rubbed all the wrong way. I think I shall go, in revenge, and join dear Fanny's following."

"No, don't do that!" said Olive. "Stay and be introduced to Miss Conway instead."

"A bribe!" he answered, saluting the young lady indicated. "Con told me he thought you would manage to come, Miss Conway."

"Oh, there was no longer any difficulty when Mrs. Topham invited me for a stay! You are coming to us in October, aren't you, Mr. Farquhar?"

"If the leave can be arranged, Miss Conway. We youngsters have to take our leave as our betters think fit."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

AGAIN WE MEET.

BY E. M. C.

Again we meet! Where shadows lay
The smiles may come—oh happy day!
By pleasant paths where blossoms twine
Again my hand is clasped in thine—
And we have met!

I know not if the hour be bright,
Or if the clouds obscure the light,
Or why I'm glad I cannot tell;
I only know I love thee well
Since first we met.

What if the world be cold and wide
If I may walk thus by thy side,
And if, when weary, on thine arm
My hand be resting, what can harm
When we have met?

The day to me seems twice as fair,
There's music in the passing air,
And fragrant flow'rs beneath our feet
Give forth a perfume strangely sweet,
Since we met.

Life's troubles for a while forgot,
We linger on this fairy spot;
The sorrows of the Past have fled,
And Grief has hid her sombre head—
For we have met!

The Last Boat.

BY E. S. D.

I AM an artist, and a well-known one, for the last several years, though I am not even now more than four and thirty; but whatsoever may be my gifts, the world would certainly not have so early recognized them but for the strange circumstances which brought me by leaps into the full blaze of public notice.

Not that at the time I was quite unknown. The name of Gerald Leigh was spoken of as that of a rising man, who might be expected in time to make considerable mark. I loved my art. I was ambitious, and a hard worker, without which last, the genius of a Michael Angelo can attain to nothingness—if such a paradoxical expression be permissible.

I had been very hard at work all that year, and about the middle of June, was glad to get a week's rest where I was an old habitue for that sort of modest holiday—at Cookham Lock, where I lodged in the pretty little house or cottage of the lockman.

I was always welcome to him and his wife and son Jack, a fine lad of eighteen. I could lounge in the little garden, bounded on one side by the lock itself, sketch, read, study the faces of those who passed through the lock, or take my boat (hired pro tem from Cookham), and go or come as early or late in as I pleased—in fact, do as I liked.

So I donned the whites, packed my few traps and transported myself to old Tom Baynes' rustic, flower surrounded home. That was on a Saturday, and I intended remaining just over the week, that is, till the Sunday night when I should return to my London lodgings ready to start work on the Monday.

The weather fortunately was splendid, and I thoroughly enjoyed my doing nothing—up to Friday night. If I were to live a hundred years, I can never forget that awful night.

All the morning I was out in my boat, but I came back about two to dinner, and after that remained in—that is, in the garden, where I could always find amusement by the hour together, helping old Tom or his son with their tickets and money-taking, and observing, whilst I chatted with this one or that of the passengers in my free and easy way, especially with the pretty girls. There is always too much a delightful freemsonry on the river that is all its own.

Dear old Thames! how I love thee!

A good many boats and launches had gone through both up and down during the day, but about three there was a long lull, the pleasure traffic being of course nothing to what it is in the autumn, when all the riverside places are full of visitors.

The last craft that went through after three was a small launch going up-stream, so that the lock was left full when Tom shut the up-gates behind her and went in to his tea.

I remained where I was outside, lounging on a low, comfortable old deck-chair, basking like a cat in the glorious sunshine; I made not even a pretence of reading the book I had fetched out, but let it lie on the grass whilst I lazily feasted my eyes on the picturesque scenery before them of river and foliage and the noble heights of Cliveden beyond on the left, down stream.

But presently, it might be a little after four, I heard the cry from up-river of "Lock"—not the modern shout of the word merely repeated short and sharp several times, but the good old fashioned sing-song call.

And this was a woman's voice too, rich and full-toned, giving out the prolonged "Lo-o ck," on two musical notes, resonant and carrying the sound, as no shout ever can do. I called out at once to Tom.

"A-hoy, Tom! boat coming down stream," as I sprang up to see who was in the boat and waved my hand out as a signal that the call was heard.

She was coming down easy, a pretty craft, a single sculler rowed by a gentleman, his sole sitter being a young lady, who was steering. She too was in white, but had a crimson sailor collar, ditto cuffs to her wide sleeves, and a crimson sash and cap.

"By Jove, she is pretty, Tom," I said, as the old seaman began to open one gate, "I'll do the ticket taking."

"All right, sir, here you are."

Tom laughed, and handed me the ticket.

The next moment the rower shipped his sculls and the boat floated into the lock, where the man kept her comfortably alongside our bank by holding to one of the chains attached to the walls of all the stone-built lock for that purpose.

From where I stood I took a regular good look at the occupants of the boat before I moved into prominence.

The man was, I should say, decidedly over thirty, fair, and good-looking; but to me there was something repellant in his face, a sort of latent storminess behind it, a quick, suspicious look in the eyes, a perpetual restlessness of the mouth, which, even as I watched, brought out once or twice an almost sinister curve. All of these characteristics I have found to belong broadly to a very violent jealous temper which veritably "makes the meat it feeds on."

"I don't like you, sirree," said I mentally. I am blessed or cursed, whichever it may be, with the artistic temperament in full measure—sensitive, high strung, impressionable, often almost painfully alive to a sense of sympathy or antipathy. To-day, with these two people, I was curiously impressed by both sensations, for, as instantly as the man stirred the latter, so the woman drew the former.

She was quite nine or ten years his junior, exquisitely pretty, with large, beautiful dark eyes, and a skin like the soft downy side of a peach; a face that stamped itself strangely on my mental vision, partly, perhaps, for the wistful, pathetic, underlying of pain I detected in it in repose.

Tom was now beginning to open the sluices of the down gates, and I went forward for the money. As I came into full view both passengers looked up straight at me naturally enough; the man with a quick frown, which roused a mischievous spirit of deviliment in me.

Over the girl's face on the contrary there went a flash of pleased recognition—unmistakably so, as when one suddenly recognizes a person seen elsewhere, but a stranger personally.

"A return ticket, I suppose?" I asked of her more than him, purposely of course, and I smiled as I bowed, offering the ticket.

She smiled too, said:

"Please. Thank you," and stretched up her left hand, which was nearest, for the bit of pink paper, and it gave me an odd start to see that she wore a wedding ring.

"Give it to me, please; here's the money," said the man quickly, leaning forward to intercept my hand, evidently irritated.

I took the threepence, but, coolly ignoring his hasty movement, gave her the ticket, remarking with comic gravity:

"That gives you in printed words the curious permission to pass in, through, under or over the lock or weir, but I fancy few would care to try that last experiment."

The gentleman said shortly:

"Not unless they were fools," but his wife (so I guessed her to be, poor girl!) laughed and answered in the same strain.

"I'm not sure that I won't get my husband to see what we can do with that mode of transit. What say you, Alfred?"

"That I prefer the ordinary water-way to Bolter's Lock," was the curt, ungraciously spoken answer. "What a time that fellow is with the sluices," flinging an angry look round towards good old Tom Baynes.

I quite understood what all this palpable and uncourteous bad temper meant. The man was jealous, even because his wife noticed or was noticed by a mere stranger like myself, but I also saw by the look of quiet defiance on her resolute mouth that she was no meek, submissive fool. I said carelessly:

"The water is sinking quite as fast as is safe. You can begin to go forward soon."

Water and boat sank down, down, until the first was level with the down stream. As Tom opened the gate the lady looked up and said to me brightly:

"Good day, and I hope you'll be famous some day."

"Thank you for so kind a wish." I answered, surprised and amused, "but I had no idea that——"

But there her husband gave the boat a savage swing forwards by the next chain hanging down, and exclaimed sharply:

"My dear Clare, do mind the rail: it ground the wall!

Which was of course not true. She only said:

"It's all right," but added to me as the boat, with which I kept pace to the gate, neared the outlet: "I saw you at the Academy in May, and you were pointed out to me as Gerald Leigh, the artist."

Then the boat swept away down stream before the strong stroke of angry rower. Tom and I watched it hearing distinctly on the clear air that he was speaking fiercely to the girl.

"Contemptible, jealous brute," I said indignantly. "Who are they, Tom? Have they been through here before?"

"No, sir; but the boat, the Formosa, belongs to Bill Gresly, at Marlow, so these two must be stopping at Marlow. I don't like him, sir, anyhow."

"Nor I, by Jove!" I answered, emphatically. "I can't imagine how she came to marry such a fellow, at all."

"Neither me, sir. He can't abear her to speak to a handsomer gentleman than hisself," chuckled Tom. "Ah! there's the missus to call you to your tea, sir."

"Thanks. And after that, Tom"—the old seaman and I were very chummy—"I'm going to sit out here and sketch those two people's faces. I can't get them out of my head. And look here, Tom, if the Formosa comes back by chance while I am indoors later—at supper, maybe—mind you give me the tip."

"All right, sir."

I was busy over my sketches all the time after tea till quite dusk, and so entirely had I the two faces before my memory and imagination that the likeness on my paper could not have been more perfect had the originals been sitting to me in bodily form. At nine I went in to supper, but was soon out again.

A curiously inexplicable restlessness was beginning to creep over me. Most of the craft both ways, which we knew must repass the lock, had returned by this time, but not a sign of the Formosa, for which I was in truth unconsciously watching with a strange expectancy.

About ten Mrs. Baynes and the son Jack went off to bed, and Tom came out to me, gave a look each way and said:

"I'm about tired too, sir, wish them two blessed craft were through so as I'd turn in."

"Are all counted through but two?" I asked. "There is the Formosa up——"

"And a launch down, sir, what come up with a big party from Skindler's this morning while you were out; and if she'll only come through first the water'll be down beautiful ready for t'other party to come in straight."

"Yes—and there is the launch then," for at that moment we heard the shrill whistle and quick regular beat of the screw of a steam launch; then her port and starboard lights showed up the lock stream and in a short time she was in the lock.

She had a lively party on board, and I caught the oddest criss cross of chatter about the day's pleasure principally, but just as the launch began to fussily puff—puff out of the lock again my attention was caught and chained by a name, and parts of remarks from a group on the poop.

"Yes, Clare Beverly and that husband of hers. Saw them as we passed up today at Gresly's place. Yes, his mad jealousy would drive any girl to bolt, I should say. Got friends at Maidenhead, I think——"

Then the launch was gone.

Beverly! so that was her name! Beautiful, unhappy Clare, who—— Bah! What a fool I was to keep thinking of her, wondering where they had gone. Perhaps to see their friends at Maidenhead and so were later back.

"Tom," I said, when he had shut the gates again, "you go and lie down on the big sofa in my parlor, and I'll call you when the Formosa is coming."

"Thank you, sir, but you——"

"Oh, I never do turn in till very late, and I certainly shouldn't go to bed early this splendid night. Why, the moon is getting above the woods already. No, I'll keep watch out here, old chap, so you do a doss, as I tell you."

He went in and I was alone in the still, mysterious night, with the weird, deep shadows and glint of the silvery moonlight on the rippling river as the moon rose higher and higher, gazing down on earth with her face of still, awesome wisdom, as if she read one's very soul.

Half past ten, a quarter to eleven, eleven, struck slowly out from Cookham church and somewhere else far off, then, again silence, save for the eternal wash of the weir away in the backstream, right behind the house.

How deadly still it was, how lonely, myself the only creature awake, the solitary, sleepless watcher. Heavens! how sleepless and watchful—for what? I scarcely knew, save that I waited for the last boat to come into the black deep waters in the lock.

Was it only awesome solitude and vastness of silence around that gre—grew into an oppression like an actual weight? Half-past eleven! Would that boat never come? Why should I wait longer? Why could I not tear myself from my self imposed watch? I tried, but I could not—that is the word—could not.

Something impelled me to stop, held me at my post, no longer even pacing to-and-fro, but standing where I commanded a full view down stream, where I should see any craft the mement it rounded the bend and passed from the shadows of the trees, into the moonlight.

A quarter to twelve! and then suddenly there came the signal for which I watched, the musical, prolonged "Lo-ock" of the morning, the same voice of Clare, and yet the sound made my very blood run ice-cold with a chill, nameless horror, strange and beyond measure awful, as the cry came again, afar, near, around me, real, weird, a wild wail of agonised appeal, in the slow, prolonged cadence, and, as it died away, my wide-strained eyes saw the boat rowed by the girl, sweep round the turn into the cold, pitiless moonlight—Clare Beverly only—alone in the boat at this hour.

What did it mean, in Heaven's name? What had happened? She came on with a long, powerful stroke and perfect form that riveted admiration. But where was the rhythmatic click-click in the rowlocks and plash of the water off the sculls? There was not a sound of either, and the curious, dreadful sensation that was creeping over me, deepened. I called hoarsely—it seemed like some strange voice:

"Tom, wake! wake! the boat is coming," and had begun to open back the gate when he came stumbling out, rubbing his dazed eyes.

"What—why?" he began, mechanically taking up his accustomed work, and pushing the huge lever beam. "Boat! I don't see nothing, sir."

"You are blind with sleep," I said, "she is closer now," I was helping him all the time, and the nearest gate was now well back against the lock wall, "and only the—only Mrs. Beverly in her; her dress is dripping wet too! Don't you see now?"

Tom stared hard at me, then down the stream, and again rubbed his eyes.

"Lord, sir, is it you or me that's queer-like? I see the boat jest there—but not a soul in her, as I'm a living man," said he, with an odd, sharp shiver. "You give me the creeps, sir."

He stepped back where he could see the water below the bank, but I felt that he was looking at me with an odd sort of fellow feeling; he was not a "sensitive," as I had been told I am, but seamen are rarely materialists, they see too much of God's wonders for that error.

As he drew back, the rower gave three or four strong strokes to send in the boat against the current with the impetus, and shipping the sculls, was instantly in the stern seat steering, and so faced me as the boat drifted slowly past into the lock.

And my God! the awful horror of that bloodless face! shall I ever forget it? I knew now, I had known it somehow in my soul from the first—that I was face to face with no mortal mystery of life and death.

I knew, with a strange great calm possessing my whole being that it had come for me, that I must go back in the boat whether I would or not, alone with that awesome figure in the stern, whithersoever it steered me.

I laid my hand in Tom's, feeling him shudder as if the hand of a corpse had touched him, and said in a hoarse whisper:

"She—it—has come for me and I must go. Go you to sleep when you have shut the

gate after—after us, Tom. This will be the last boat in the lock to-night."

Tom wrung my hand in silence and followed me to the edge of the lock above where the boat lay in gloom below by the wall. I went over, lowering myself by the chain into her, took the rower's seat, pushed off, wore her head round and pulled out of the lock down stream, with that dreadful white figure sitting opposite, steering me I knew—by the terrible prescience that had its source beyond mortal bounds—to the discovery of an appalling crime. Then I saw that the white dress was dripping wet.

I felt every nerve strung up to a kind of agony, and yet I seemed to be endowed with a strength more than human. The boat flew at racing speed before my strokes, down the lock stream, out into the open river, past Formosa Island on the right, and then, as I had foreseen, my weird guide headed straight for the famous backwater which skirts Cliveden and Taplow Heights, parallel to the main stream nearly down to the weir and mill by Maidenhead (Bolter's) Lock.

I had to ease down and go carefully—the current runs strong, the backwater is narrow and reedy near the banks—and how deep the gloom was under the heavy shadows of the trees, how black and deep the water looked! I shivered in the warm, summer night, as if the breeze that sighed overhead were a winter blast.

On, on, still in the grim quiet, and yet no sign to arrest the slow measured sweep of the oars in my hands—on, past the gateless old gateposts which divide the Cliveden from the Taplow Court grounds—on, still for just another hundred yards, where the bank was rather steep and high and the water very deep and, I knew, full of bind-weeds below.

I felt every fibre, every nerve to be strung up to a tension that seemed nigh to breaking point. For the first time I glanced back over my shoulder and in that second I felt a clammy dead-cold touch on my hand that made my very heart stand still, but instantly checked the boat, starting round towards——

It was gone, I was alone in the awful solitude and the silence of a dark deed, done to night. I bent over the boat's side I saw the white garments below, caught perhaps amongst reeds and tree roots. I could surely discern the beautiful dead face, staring up with wide, sightless eyes through the water—my God! the corpse of a murdered woman!

* * * * * *

I made my way to the Maidenhead police station to get help and give full information and a description of the murderer Alfred Beverly, adding that I could give the inspector a drawing of the man, and of course I went back with the police to the scene of the crime, and when the body was brought ashore and examined by the divisional surgeon he found marks on the white throat which showed that the assassin had at least half throttled his helpless victim before he drowned her.

The watch Clare wore we found had stopped at twenty-five minutes to twelve, that is, just ten minutes before I heard and saw Clare's spirit self, my twin soul. And assuredly but for my aid, so mysteriously invoked, the black deed would have remained undiscovered long enough for the murderer to make good his escape. Now, any attempt came too late—descriptions, and the likeness of him were fatal obstacles, and he was traced and arrested the next evening.

I have little more to tell of this strange, most awful story, which I do not even pretend to explain, for our finite mortality can only, we know, "see through a glass darkly." I can only say what happened—the why is beyond me.

The whole case and its extraordinary circumstances made a sensation not soon forgotten, and naturally my strange evidence, which Tom Baynes corroborated, was talked over, discussed, canvassed by everyone.

There stood the logic of fact. I had not, could not possibly have known or suspected the murder unless my story were true.

The wretched jealous husband's guilt was proved fully at the trial and the law's just penalty was carried out, while for me, Gerald Leigh, the artist, the tragic story fulfilled poor Clare's generous and even terribly prophetic wish:

"I hope you will be famous one day!" I stood at once in the fierce white light of public notice. I received commissions at almost my own terms, and a leading picture dealer offered me an enormous price for a portrait of Clare Beverly.

I refused. Only my two or two very intimate friends, and now, my dear wife, ever see a picture which hangs in my private room next the studio—a picture which something beyond myself impelled me to paint, so deep and haunting was the impression on my inmost soul of the scene and first sight of that mysterious messenger. Underneath the picture I have written only "The Last Boat in the Lock."

The Empty House.

BY G. V.

THE weather was certainly hopeless. Even my optimism failed to believe that it would soon clear. The hour was nine o'clock P. M., and the rain still poured down in torrents, while the wind was blowing, as it well knows how in Italy, and was howling in the trees like a host of fiends. I was tired, hungry, soaked to the skin, and the darkness was so dense that I could not see two yards ahead.

Having been bitten with the bicycling mania, I had spent my holidays in a tour through Central Italy on my machine. Up to now my trip had proved a decided success, but why had I left the comfortable inn at S—— and set off across the long stretch of plain to T—— in such unpromising weather?

Presently I thought I could make out a light in the far distance. I hastened forward, and it grew brighter and brighter as I approached. Now I saw that it proceeded from the windows of a large house on a slight eminence to the right. The grounds were enclosed by a high wall, and close to the road was a gate with stone pillars surmounted by quaint weather-beaten figures.

I passed through the ruined gate and walked up the long avenue of stately cypresses leading to the house. This road was, if possible, in a worse state than the one I had just quitted, and was over grown with weeds. The house was hidden from me by the cypresses, but a sound of music proceeding from it reached my ears, and the lights within cast bright gleams on the shining wet terrace before the house.

Several windows were brightly lit up, and seemed to bid one a pleasant welcome. I searched for a bell, but finding none, resorted to knocking. I could now hear music very distinctly. A woman's voice was singing a sweet melancholy air in a high key, accompanied by a tinkly piano. The voice was a pure soprano, and evidently well trained.

I had been listening so intently to the music, that I did not realize that no notice had been taken of my knocking. But as I was getting colder and colder every instant, I woke up to the fact soon enough, and repeated my knocks, but with no result. Then the singing stopped, and I could detect the murmur of voices and the rustling of silken dresses.

At last, my patience exhausted, I gave the door a violent kick, upon which it opened wide, creaking on its hinges. To my astonishment all was dark within, and the sounds that I had heard ceased suddenly.

I carried my bicycle in, and by the aid of its lantern inspected the entrance hall. It was a large room running right through the house, and there were remains of gilding and frescoes on the walls, but all was decayed, and dust and cobwebs covered everything. The furniture consisted of a few broken chairs and some moth-eaten hangings. The panes of the windows were all broken.

I found the room whence I thought the music had proceeded. It was a small boudoir furnished with fragments of rococo chairs and tables. One or two dark pictures hung opposite the window, and in a corner stood a small harpsichord with faint tracings of paintings.

I set to work to find something that would burn, which was not difficult, owing to the broken furniture lying about. I had soon collected a sufficient quantity of sticks and pieces of wood, which I heaped up in the middle of the apartment, but to set them alight was no easy job; everything was damp. However, after some little time I accomplished it, and sat down by the fire to dry my clothes and warm myself.

Then I began to speculate as to who had lived in this place, and what had happened here, but of course could arrive at no satisfactory conclusion. When I felt sufficiently restored, I went out to see what the weather was doing. I saw with relief that it had cleared up considerably, and a few stars were breaking here and there through the canopy of black clouds. I therefore put out the fire, left the house with my bicycle, and closed the door behind me. At once the music began again; the same voice sang the same song again, clear and distinct. I turned round, and behold, the windows of the house were again lit up. This was certainly most mysterious. I had not been dreaming after all! Or was I dreaming still? Who could tell?

I hurried down the avenue away from that weird p ace as fast as I could go, and, as I passed between the gate pillars, I could still hear that sweet haunting strain of music.

After following the road for a couple of hours, I saw the welcome lights of T—— twinkling in the distance, and in a few minutes I was seated by the bright fire of the Golden Lion Inn, discussing a substantial meal. I went to bed, and the next morning felt as fit as ever.

Before starting, I asked our landlord if he knew anything about the deserted villa on the hill half-way to S——. He knew nothing about it, save that it belonged to a Roman family whose name he could not remember. They never came there now, and in fact nobody could live in it because "one heard things." There was no legend connected with it that he knew of; but not all the gold in Christendom would have induced him to go near it after dark.

* * * * * *

Two years afterwards I was again in Italy for a short holiday, and, at an Embassy ball in Rome, happened to be introduced to the young Countess Tadescalchi. She was very charming and clever, and she invited me to her house, which was a grand old palace in which Renaissance art and picturesqueness were combined with modern comfort and refinement.

Both the Countess and her husband were fond of music, and often gave small concerts to just a few friends, among whom I was fortunate enough to be reckoned. At one of these entertainments, after several celebrated professionals and amateurs had performed, the Countess herself went up to the piano and sang an old Italian air. It seemed familiar to me, but at first I could not remember where I had heard it. Suddenly it flashed upon me that this was the song that I had heard on that stormy night in the lonely villa, two years before. Now perhaps the mystery would be cleared up. So, lingering until most of the other guests had left, I begged her to tell me all about that haunting strain and its composer.

"That air," she said in reply to my query, "is from an opera called 'Antigone,' composed by an ancestor of ours, Camillo Tadescalchi, who lived a hundred and fifty years ago. He was intensely anxious to have his opera performed at Milan, for he hoped to win fame, but he died of consumption, poor man, before he could be brought out. In his last days, when too weak to move, he would often summon some of the most celebrated singers of the day to his villa of Montalto, near S——, and make them sing parts of his opera. He hoped against hope that he would live to see it on the stage, and was always talking about the day when he would be well enough to lead the orchestra at Milan for 'Antigone.' His music is very charming, but always melancholy. Had he lived he would doubtless have become famous."

"But what about his villa?" I asked. "To whom does it now belong?"

"Montalto," she replied, "still belongs to our family, but it is falling into ruin. No one lives there now, because it is supposed to be haunted by poor Camillo's ghost, and also by that of the fair Bianca Fossi, one of the greatest sopranos of the time, who sang his songs to him, and with whom he was said to be in love; but these are old wives' tales."

But I had my own opinion on the subject.

TO ATTRACT CUSTOM.—An ingenious device for attracting custom was that of a fruiterer in an Eastern town. Instead of ordinary plate glass, a large number of rough magnifying glasses formed the window. Seen through one of these panes an orange looked as large as a pumpkin, and cherries as large as apples. A great disadvantage attaching to this novelty was the fact that at the distance of a few yards from the window it was quite impossible to see into the shop. Everybody knows that you must hold a magnifying glass very close to the eyes to see anything through it. Nevertheless, for some time, at all events, the enterprising shopkeeper did a splendid trade.

Scientific and Useful.

BEDCLOTHES.—An ingenious use of electricity is to warm the bedclothes. This is done by heating a system of wires inside a double quilt. The current can be regulated at will and the temperature maintained at the required degree.

PIPES.—A new material for the making of pipes has been found in turkey bones. These bones are said to make the most perfect stems imaginable. The substance is light, porous and resists the pressure of the teeth. Smoke drawn through the turkey bone is cool and sweet.

A WEATHER INDICATOR.—We are all anxious to discover a true weather indicator—one that is strictly up to date. Not many know of the following method: Go out and select the smallest cloud you can see. If it decreases and disappears, it shows a state of the air that is sure to be followed by fair weather, but if it increases, you may expect rain.

TO GUARD AGAINST CONTAGION.—A special mouthpiece for public telephones has been introduced into Germany in order to avoid the spread of diseases by the condensed moisture of the breath. A pad of a large number of discs of paper, with a hole in the middle, is inserted in the mouthpiece, the upper disc of the paper being torn off after every conversation.

TO FORETELL STORMS.—When a tempest is approaching or passing out on the ocean, the tides are noticeably higher than usual, as if the water had been driven in a vast wave before the storm. The influence extends to a great distance from the cyclonic storm centre, so that the possibility exists of foretelling the approach of a dangerous hurricane by means of indications furnished by tide gauges situated far away from the place then occupied by the whirling winds. The fact that the tidal wave outstrips the advancing storm shows how extremely sensitive the surface of the sea is to the changes of pressure brought to bear upon it by the never resting atmosphere.

Farm and Garden.

HELP.—The farmer who undertakes to make farming pay by hiring a man while he directs must have plenty of capital and if the farm is small he should not expect large returns. On small farms the labor of the farmers who own them is a large item to be estimated.

THE CHICKENS.—Now that warm weather has come it is a waste of food to give grain to poultry, as the fowls can secure all the food needed by them. Should the hens become very fat they will not lay, and are also then liable to diseases which usually result from overfeeding during warm weather.

REMEDIES.—Remedies for diseases are given before learning the cause or the nature of the disease. Recently a whole herd of swine belonging to a stockman became sick with supposed cholera, but examination after death showed that the hogs had gorged themselves with pumkin seeds, which did not digest.

FOOD.—The ideal food for breeding cows is a mixture of two bushels of oats and one bushel of peas, fed whole with mangels. The cost of grinding is saved and the food is well chewed. Wheat middlings with milk, when had, and beets is another favorite ration. Laxative food makes the muscles yielding and there is no trouble when farrowing.

SOIL.—The surest evidence that the soil is losing in fertility is when there is a falling off in the yield of crops year after year. The loss in yield for one year is not an indication, as lack of cultivation, draught, or improper selection of the variety of plants best adapted for the purpose, may influence the yield, but if farming is done in a correct manner the land should improve every year. If a plot of land has decreased in value to a point where the cost of restoring fertility is greater than the value of any crop that may be grown upon it there is no known method of recovering the loss except at an expense proportionate to the decrease of plant food in the soil.

IT IS WELL TO GET CLEAR OF A COLD the first week, but it is much better and safer to rid yourself of it the first forty-eight hours—the proper remedy for the purpose being Dr. D. Jayne's Expectorant. The best family Pill, Jayne's Painless Sugar-Coated Sanative.

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Life---What Is It?

For six thousand years mankind have been endeavoring to answer this question. They have received and enjoyed the gift, and regarded it as the most precious that could be bestowed upon them, yet always without knowing it is. Philosophers, physiologists, metaphysicians, have in turn attempted to solve the problem by the subtleties of logic, by scientific investigations, by meditation on the laws which regulate the existence and movements of the whole universe, but hitherto without arriving at any satisfactory result. Disappointed ambition has pronounced it to be "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

The first germ of life in the animal and vegetable kingdoms has nothing in shape or form indicating what it is to become; and when the vital principle quits its mortal residence it takes its departure silently, invisibly, mysteriously; so that the point of time is often doubtful, though its absence begins soon to be felt by the icy chill which succeeds to the warmth and joyousness of life. Well may man denominate himself a microcosm, a little universe; for such he really is; and, to all intents and purposes, quite as unintelligible as the great one.

When he first receives animation, he is little more than an unformed particle of matter; but no sooner does the divine spark enter into him, than he displays motion, and activity, and growth, and development; and by degrees all the cells and chambers of the mind become filled with imagery, with living and palpitating ideas, eternal in their essences, each and all of them representing some portions, material or immaterial, of God's creation, and swelling and expanding, till the interior of the new creature becomes a mirror, vast enough to reflect the entire universe without.

This, however, it will be perceived, does not help us forward one single step towards a solution of the problem, What is Life? We are able to study its phenomena as they display themselves before us one after another by the toil of years; we can place ourselves beside what were once considered the hidden springs of existence, and watch them as they bubble up and overflow into new forms and varieties of organization; we can look above, below, and around us, and observe how the mighty ocean of being—suns, stars, planets, comets, seas, lands, animals, vegetables, minerals—present everchanging phases of life; dilate, contract, merge alternately in each other, spring up, flourish, decay, and perish; exhibiting every instant new features—now seeming to promise the beauty of eternal youth, and now fading away suddenly like the grass.

Yet, so far as reason can discover, there has never, since the universe was called into existence, been added to it a single particle of matter. All things are but altered; nothing dies. The infinite fluctuations and metamorphoses, we perceive, are all wrought with the same materials.

It would profit us very little to say that life is a power or an energy; for the question would immediately occur, what is power, or what is energy? It is not the soul, though in man it comes and goes with the soul. It has been supposed to be an idea taken from the Supreme Being, and stationed for a while in a finite form of existence. If this be not the truth, it probably of all hypotheses approaches nearest to it. In us the vital principle is invested with numerous attributes, which in their development throw forth innumerable ideas, relations, duties, affinities, sympathies, antipathies, and thus make us the centre of a world of thought. Thus life becomes prolific, and moves through its own creation almost like a divinity. But where does it find its root; whence derive its formative and plastic energies? Does it not descend in search of these far beyond the level of individual existence—to that boundless ocean of power which clasps the whole universe, and is the substance with which all its shows and manifestations are fashioned? If this be answered in the affirmative, then to say what life is, is to say what God is—an obvious impossibility.

In this direction, therefore, we can go no further, and must return to look upon life from a phenomenal point of view. According to a Roman poet, life is not to live, but to be happy; in which case few can be said to live. The poison which destroyed the son of Philip is said to have been of so powerful a nature that it devoured every vessel into which it was poured, save one scooped out of an ass's hoof. Life is still more destructive than that poison; no vessel into which it is poured can last. However young, or strong, or beautiful, the corroding essence of life soon saps, undermines, withers, and destroys it; that essence passes on from generation to generation, quickening for a while, but ultimately consuming every thing it touches.

The mother, in the infant at her breast, beholds, without knowing it, the grave of her life as well as of her beauty. That infant has received the essence from her, and in its turn will transmit to another generation, and so on "to the last syllable of recorded time." But what is it that these creatures transmit to each other? We call it balm, a corroding essence; but in itself it is neither the one nor the other, but something which is never at a stay, but goes on rolling over the heads of successive harvests of men, crushing them back into the soil from which they sprang.

Yet, What is Life? It is well to ask ourselves the question, that, if possible, we may pause and consider what use we are making of it. Whatever its essence may be, it is a grand principle, and implies in those who have received it a world of duties and responsibilities towards ourselves and others.

Above all things it is thus with regard to friends. While they are alive and present, their faults, lying on the surface, eclipse their virtues, which are hidden within; but when Death has snatched them away, their virtues blaze forth upon us, and efface from our memories the very recollection of their blemishes. With the wise, reflection forestalls the achievement of Death, cancels the faults of those we love, and concentrates our thoughts on their good and noble qualities, and by this process contrives to extract out of life the sweetest honey, while it blunts, if it cannot destroy, the sting which too often accompanies it.

Things are sometimes best understood by contemplating their opposites; and so by looking at Death we may be assisted in forming some idea of Life; to the continuance of which various conditions are necessary—as warmth, air, moisture, and nutriment. Death is sufficient to itself, and retires out of the sight of the sun, to darkness and solitude; Life is ever craving sustenance—is supported by absorption, by devouring every thing around it; and thus to other beings it is a cause of death.

Man would be startled if he saw drawn forth in terrible array before him all the creatures whose lives have been sacrificed to his—the oxen and the sheep, the fish, the game, the poultry, and the insects. What would he say were they empowered by nature to demand their lives at his hands? In all the religions of the East, Life and Death are represented as twins, always in each other's company, and playing into each other's hands. Their symbols, too, are intertwined; the cradle keeps pace with the grave; the swaddling band wraps round the shroud, and often proves more than a match for its influence.

The Greeks intimated the inexplicable nature of this problem by asking if the egg was before the bird, or the bird before the egg. If the egg were first, who hatched it? If the bird, whence did it proceed? So with us; we can describe the phenomena of Life, show the point at which it rises to view, trace its course across the field of existence, and direct attention to the spot where it disappears from sight. But to the question, What is it? our only answer is an admission of profound ignorance—an ignorance always felt by our species, an ignorance perfectly blank and hopeless.

We had once, as a friend, a great physician, who devoted the greater part of his life to the solution of this problem, but lamented, when near its close, he had not given up the time exclusively to the means of solacing and soothing it, without engaging in the vain attempt to discover what it is—a knowledge which seems purposely reserved to the Author of Life, with whom alone perhaps it can be safe.

To secure the well-balanced action of the whole nature, it is needful to nourish every part, and the wise parent will watchfully study the child that he may stimulate what is deficient. Instead of using the motive which will soonest and most easily produce the conduct desired, it may be better to excite those which lie dormant. Rewards and penalties will be sparingly used, and the springs of action which reside in the affections, the sympathies, the taste, will be played upon according to the mental and moral needs.

THE more married men you have, says Voltaire, the fewer crimes there will be. Examine the frightful columns of our criminal calendars—you will there find a hundred youths executed for one father of a family. Marriage renders a man virtuous and more wise. The father of a family is not willing to blush before his children.

HE that has never known adversity is but half acquainted with others, or with himself. Constant success shows us but one side of the world; for as it surrounds us with friends who will see only our merits, so it silences those enemies from whom alone we can learn our defects.

THE object of conversation is to entertain and amuse. To be agreeable you must learn to be a good listener. A man who monopolizes a conversation is a bore, no matter how great his knowledge.

WRITE your name by kindness, love, and mercy, on the hearts of the people you come in contact with year by year, and you will never be forgotten.

A COMMON arm-chair is a more comfortable seat than a throne, and a soft beaver hat a lighter and more pleasant piece of head-gear than a crown.

A GOOD word is an easy obligation; but not to speak ill requires only our silence, which costs us nothing.

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENT.

T. F. E.—The Seven Sleepers, according to the legend, were seven youths who refused to worship at a statue set up in Ephesus by the Emperor Decius. They fled to a cavern in the mountains, where they were miraculously shut up, and remained asleep for three hundred years.

BYRON.—Childe Harold signifies Harold the eldest Son. The world Childe is pronounced in one syllable, and as though the final e were omitted. The custom of styling the heir of a noble house "Childe" ceased with the so-called age of chivalry. Byron explains in the preface of his poem that he used the prefix Childe for the convenience of versification.

S. B.—Figs are dried by exposure to the sun, in the same way that grapes are dried. During the drying, they are pressed with the hands, and frequently turned about. When the fig harvest commences, nearly the whole population engage in the work. Recently the men employed at the railway works near Smyrna "struck," in order to assist at the annual fig-harvest.

SELINA.—The art of making wax fruit and flowers is said to be easily acquired, though, of course, perfection in modelling and coloring can be gained only in close study. In modelling fruit in wax, it is usual to take a mould of the object to be imitated in plaster of Paris, or in a flexible composition of beeswax, Burgundy pitch, and Venice turpentine, with a very small quantity of olive oil. Wax for making flowers is bleached and prepared in thin sheets of various colors, which are cut into shapes for leaves, petals, etc., according to the flowers to be imited. It would be better to buy such articles as are needed rather than to attempt making those of an inferior grade. The application of colors to wax flowers is on the same principle as that of water-color painting.

E. F. C.—1 The vessels engaged in laying the first Atlantic cable were the Great Eastern, the screw-steamers Medway and Albany, and the British Government war steamer Terrible. 2 The cable required, in addition to the somewhat more than 1,000 miles in length remaining from that of 1865, was completed early in May, 1859. It had for a conductor a copper strand of seven wires, six laid around one, weight, 400 lbs. per nautical mile. The outer coat was ten solid wires galvanized, each wire surrounded separately with five strands of white yarn, and the whole laid spirally around the core, which had previously been padded with a serving of tarred hemp. The breaking strain was 8 tons 2 cwt., and it was capable of bearing its own weight in 12 miles' depth of water. The length of cable was 2,730 nautical miles, part of which was used for completing the cable which parted in 1865. Since the completion of this cable, others have been successfully laid, and telegraphic communication goes on uninterruptedly.

GLASS.—According to Pliny, glass was first made in Phœnicia, some mariners having accidentally discovered the art whilst burning nitre on the sea-shore. That art, says Bede, was brought into Britian by Benedict Biscop, in the year 675, when he obtained "artificers" from Gaul to teach it to the English, after they had glazed the windows of the church he had built at Weremouth. St Jerome is the first who mentions the use of glass for that purpose, in the fourth century; for though the ancients used glass for wine bottles, jugs, drinking cups, mirrors, etc., when windows were glazed, they employed a transparent stone, probably talc, which Pliny says was flyst discovered in Spain, and then in Cyprus, Cappadocia, Sicily, and Africa, and which, according to Seneca, could be split into slabs like slate, but not above five feet long each. It is usually believed that window-glass was first made in England in 1557, in Crutched Friars: but Venerable Bede, who was born in the year 673, shows, as above stated, that the art of making window glass was practised in that country a thousand years earlier.

INQUIRER.—From the wording of your letter we cannot tell with certainty whether you have made up your mind to go to Mexico or are only thinking of the change as a possibility. Whichever is the true reading, we urge you to think over the matter again. There are many reasons why you should hesitate before seeking such an uncongenial home. The language, for example, is a great drawback to any one who speaks only English. The climate and conditions of living are exceedingly varied. The people are a mixture hard to understand. Do not think of Mexico as a land nearly all alike, similar to Pennsylvania. It has every variety of climate and of productions. In the hot low-coast districts, where the air is like the air of an oven and yellow fever is constantly tithing the white population, you could not work, and it is questionable whether you could live. The country there is overpoweringly tropical. Towards the frontier there are ranching lands; but ranching is a very lonely and dreary business. As the mountains are ascended, you find every variety of climate except dampness and meet with the vegetation of all the zones. But how could you hope to make progress in this strange land, among a foreign hybrid people speaking an unknown tongue? Who would take you as a clerk? If you turned to agriculture, your work would not be of the same value as elsewhere, for the crude Mexican methods of agriculture would certainly differ from yours. Do not go to Mexico unless you have secured a good post. To go there as a speculation would be very unwise.

AFTER LONG MONTHS.

BY S. C. W.

After long months we meet again
  Among the nodding daffodils,
The light lies low along the plain,
  And over all the purple hills;
The merry thrush sing out the day
  With bursts of May-time madrigals,
And, from the freshly budded spray,
  Through opening leaves, the chiff chaff calls.

How different all when last we met
  In dim fields dashed with autumn rain,
And watched the last late swallow set
  His wings towards the south again!
Long time we strove, with voices low,
  And alien lips, light words to speak;
And was it rain that trembled so
  From those long lashes down your cheek?

We parted, as the mists drew down,
  The gray mists, gathering fold on fold,
And, through the dusk, the little town
  Glimmered, far off, with sparks of gold.
We watched the lamps wake, one by one,
  Gold stars beneath the starless sky,
And hand touched hand, and all was done
  'Twixt hearts too full to say good-bye.

And now spring stands, with sunny smile,
  Over the dead months cold and gray;
I think we've dreamed a weary while
  And wakened to the perfect day.
With winter's snow and autumn's rain
  The days of lonely life are o'er;
Forget the parting and the pain
  Since our two hearts have met once more.

All Is Vanity.

BY E. P.

SHE was standing at the gate leading into the big field, her arms crossed on the topmost bar, her chin resting on her interlaced hands, and her eyes roaming over the flat expanse of rich green which stretched away in monotonous planes of distance, until it met the purple line of bog which again faded into the dim blue outline of the Dublin mountains, lying cloud-like on the horizon line.

It was five o'clock, and the thick white evening mist was already rising from the rich pasture-land on which the sun had been shining all day. The cows, making their way slowly to the milking-sheds, waded knee-deep through the ghostly sea of steamy fog, snatching last morsels of the sweet aftergrass as they went, and moo-ing indignant protests as Billy, the herd's boy, who hurried their lagging steps with shout interspersed with adjurations of an uncomplimentary nature to the more dilatory.

It was a pastoral scene, not wanting in a beauty of its own, but Lavinia Farrell as she leaned over the gate could not be said to add another to its many picturesque details. Lavinia was not built on the lines of a heroine.

She was gaunt-figured and heavy-featured, with pale freckled complexion, hair of an undeterminate straw color, which even with St. Paul's authority it would be stretching a point to call "a glory;" and the eyes which now gazed vacantly at the approaching cattle, though good in size and shape, were wanting in depth of color and expression.

At the same time she possessed the undoubted charm of being suited to her surroundings, and in an Irish midland county, in a society of agriculturists, whose thoughts and conversation vibrated with the soothing monotony of an eight-day clock, from the hunting prospects in winter to the ravages of foot-and-mouth disease in summer, Lavinia, in her short-waisted, badly-cut coat, and with her appreciation of the good points of a "beast," was eminently in correspondence with her environment.

She roused herself at last, thrust her large bony hands deep down into the pockets of her jacket, and with a sigh turned from the steamy pasture-land, and strolled up the narrow gravel drive leading to her home.

It did not enter into Lavinia's philosophy to ask herself why she indulged in such an unaccustomed expression of emotion.

It has already been said that she was not built on the correct lines of a heroine. Doubtless had she been so she would have dissected that sigh with accuracy, labelling its first and secondary causes with the neatness of the analytical chemist, and would have stored away the specimens in the shelves of her memory until a recurrence of the phenomenon should make it advisable to take them down for the purpose of comparison and readjustment.

But the pleasure of such scientific self criticism was denied to Lavinia. Her life had hitherto been so uniformly even and dull that a disturbing element, when it made itself felt, was so novel as to be incomprehensible, and far beyond her slow bovine mind to classify.

As it was she was but vaguely conscious of its presence, and its only outward expression with the sigh already chronicled was a half-formulated wish that she could manage to get boots which did not always wrinkle across the toes.

This thought was uppermost as she scraped the thick pasty field mud off them on the iron scraper, slowly mounted the few steps leading to the hall-door, and paused for a moment in the little hall to make a mental calculation of how soon she could afford herself a new pair.

"Not till I sell the calf, anyway," she concluded, as she opened the dining-room door.

Afternoon tea at the Farrells' was not one of those delightful informal meals generally understood by the name. It was, as everything connected with Mrs. Farrell seemed involuntarily to become, heavy, solid, satisfying.

The large round mahogany table, covered by an ordinary dining-room damask cloth, was laid as for breakfast, with places for each member of the family, and the only concession to modern frivolity was a plate of mixed biscuits with sugared tops, blushing pink at their own worldliness as they contrasted themselves with the staid respectability of the cottage-loaf which occupied the centre of the table.

As Lavinia entered her mother motioned her silently to her place, but her two sisters were not so reticent. Rebecca-Mary stopped in the act of helping herself to a particularly attractive biscuit to whisper something to Mina, reducing them both to such a helpless state of giggles that Lavinia's father, who with his paper propped up before him, was reading the news between gulps of hot tea and mouthfuls of bread and butter, looked up over his spectacles to inquire what the good joke was.

"Oh, nothing particular," tittered Rebecca-Mary. "We were only wondering what was the attraction kept Lavinia out so late this cold evening."

"I was down at the gate watching the cows being driven in," said Lavinia shortly. Her slow mind vaguely realized that the "girls" were holding her up to some kind of ridicule, but she failed to see the exact drift of the remark.

"Dear me!" exclaimed Mina, with a touch of sub-acid in her tone. "I suppose, now, you were looking for a good subject for a photo. It's a great pity the Barrys drove away so early, or maybe they might have been of great assistance to you."

George Farrell had relapsed into his newspaper, but the mention of the Barrys' name brought him up to the surface again.

"What's that about the Barrys?" he said, in his comfortable slow rolling brogue. "Well now, they may be thankful I happened to be down at the gate this morning. They ought to have had more sense than to be driving a flighty young bit of a mare with the threshing machine always at work not more than a few perch from the roadside in one field or another. I declare to goodness I thought both of them would be sent to glory, and Miss Barry may think herself mighty lucky to have nothing worse than a sprained wrist and a broken shaft to complain of."

"Then, indeed, George," said his wife, brushing some crumbs from her expansive lap to a more unobtrusive position under the table, "I wasn't a bit too well pleased to see you bringing them up the avenue, and I with my old cap on, and the sitting-room all of a litter with the dress Mina was cutting out.

"It was all I could do to get everything pushed away in time before you brought them in on top of me—and then to get Lily oil and bandages, and to have the ducks cooked for luncheon, when I was counting on them for Sunday's dinner, and all for the Barrys, who never come to call more than once in a blue moon! I was just mad with you."

"Well, I could hardly leave them there sitting by the roadside while the trap was being patched," began George Farrell in self-defence, when Mina broke in:

"I don't know at all why the Barrys should give themselves such airs, I'm sure. Now to-day Miss Barry had on a dowdy old tweed dress, and what I remember well seeing on her in church a year ago, only she has had the trimmings altered; and as for Captain Barry, I see nothing to admire in him, for all he's an officer. Not half so pleasant as Captain Fagan! D'ye remember, Rebecca-Mary, the awful fun we had with him the last time the Militia was out?"

"Ah, indeed, I do, Mina; but no wonder you didn't find Captain Barry very entertaining, and for the matter of that neither did I, when he'd talk of nothing but photographs from the moment he laid eyes on Lavinia's camera over in the corner," said Rebecca-Mary with a toss of her head.

"But I let him see what I thought of him nicely. 'Are you the photographer, Miss Farrell?" he says to me. 'No, indeed, Captain Barry,' I said quite sharp back; 'I wouldn't be bothered photographing—I'd rather be flirting.'"

Rebecca-Mary bridled as she recalled her promptness of repartee.

"He didn't say much to me after that, I can tell you; but I daresay now, Lavinia found him pleasant enough!"

A dull red flush crept over Lavinia's face at this sally, mounting up to the roots of her straw-colored hair. As a rule, she had no objection, in fact looked upon it as a matter of course, that she should be made the butt of her sisters' witticisms—it amused them, and had no effect on her.

But in some mysterious way this shaft found its way home, stinging her with a consciousness of its partial truth, and producing an unwonted sense of discomfort and annoyance. She made desperate effort to change the conversation and turned to her father.

"The Herefordshire calf's improving greatly, father; Peter says she'll fetch a good price at the November fair, if I sell her there." But Rebecca-Mary was not to be baulked.

"Just listen to her," she said with a little scream of laughter, "listen to her pretending it was calves she was thinking about when she was mooning below at the gate. Well, to think I should ever see Lavinia in love! and with Captain Barry, too! Did you ever hear such a thing!"

Lavinia sought in her mind for a retort wherewith to silence her tormentor, but her powers of repartee were not equal to the occasion, and there is no knowing how much longer she would have had to endure Rebecca-Mary's airy badinage had not her father come unexpectedly to her rescue.

"Ah, give over teasing Lavinia," he said, as he passed his cup up the table to be replenished; "if you're jealous of her, you might have more sense than to show it. Anyhow, my head's addled with the nonsense you talk, and I'll be thankful to you if you'll stop clacking and let me read my paper in peace."

No one would have been more astonished than Cuthbert Barry at the innuendoes conveyed in the foregoing conversation, could he have heard them. He was eminently an easy-going good-natured man, possessing, to a degree which was almost a misfortune, the wish to be agreeable and the power of making himself so.

When therefore fate, assisted by a threshing machine, had unexpectedly thrown him into the Farrells' company, he had instinctively exerted himself to overcome the difficulty of the situation, and had used his charm of manner to such good purpose and with such apparent ingenuousness that no one, excepting himself, realized that his interest in Lavinia's photographic successes and failures were only simulated for the sake of making a bad quarter of an hour pass pleasantly.

The photographs had been to him as a lifebelt to a drowning man; he had clutched at them as a means of escape from the overpowering directness of Rebecca Mary's style of arch conversation; and once the strain of circumstance was relieved, Lavinia and her artistic efforts faded away from his memory, and formed themselves into a hazy background to the more amusing details of the Farrells' luncheon-party.

He was scarcely to blame if his deferential, respectful manner and his skilfully chosen words of appreciation had roused in Lavinia a dim and unwonted feeling of self-respect, mingled with gratitude which the subsequent jests of her sisters quickened into life and definiteness, giving her glimpses of possibilities which had never before entered into the range of her mental vision.

These might have passed away as lightly as they had come, only that Lavinia's ill-fortune once more threw Cuthbert in her way.

He was riding home after an early morning's cub-hunting, whistling softly to himself, and eyeing with keen artistic pleasure the fiery autumn tints of the beeches mingling with the delicate yellow of the lime-trees, whose branches seemed hung with large golden guineas dropping at each breath of morning air noiselessly to the ground.

Suddenly the peacefulness of the scene was jarred by the growling and yapping of two dogs evidently engaged in mortal combat. Cuthbert's artistic reverie was shattered, and as he rounded a turn in the lane, he came upon a fox terrier and a red-haired dog of uncertain pedigree rolling in the heaps of yellow leaves and apparently bent on mutual destruction.

Cowering up against the hedge, with her fingers in her ears, was Miss Mina Farrell, while Lavinia was making gallant but ineffectual attempts to seize one of the dogs by the tail.

Cuthbert took in the situation at a glance, and jumping down from his horse, struck the dog which first came uppermost over the ribs with his hunting crop, and at the same time caught the fox-terrier by his apology for a tail, and dragged the combatants apart. A second blow of the crop sent the red-haired dog yelping off through a convenient gap in the hedge, and Lavinia then had time to recognise and thank him for his assistance.

Rebecca-Mary too came forward from her place of safety and overwhelmed him with voluble gratitude.

"'Tis very kind of you indeed, Captain Brrry, to come to our help! Indeed I'm always telling Lavinia that she shouldn't bring Jack out for walks, without we have a gentleman with us, for as sure as we meet another dog, Jack is certain to fight him; and I assure you, I'm half-dead with fright this minute, Captain Barry."

Cuthbert smiled vaguely in answer, and looked at Lavinia, who was wiping away some drops of blood from her wrist.

"I hope you're not bitten, Miss Farrell?" he asked with sudden interest. "I was afraid you would be when I saw you trying to catch that cur by the tail."

"Oh! it's nothing," said Lavinia hurriedly and coloring scarlet; "only a little bit of a scratch."

"But, excuse me, you ought to be careful even of a scratch where a dog is concerned," Cuthbert said. "May I see it?" taking her hand as he spoke, and looking at it closely. "Ah! I am glad to see it is not much, but if I were you, I should wash it at once, just as a preventive, you know—it's better to be sure than sorry."

Lavinia thought her hand had never looked so red and bony as it did as it lay in his. She was glad when he let it go again and turned to mount his horse.

"Good-bye," he said, as he gathered up his reins, "or, rather au revoir! I shall see you at our dance on Wednesday, shall I not?"

The question was addressed to Lavinia, and he noticed a look of confusion on her face as she answered in her abrupt, short way:

"I'm not going; the girls and my mother are."

"Not coming? Why not? Don't you care about dancing?"

"It's not that," said Lavinia; "but they thought—we thought—you would not care to have so many of us."

"Not care!" repeated Cuthbert, bending down towards her over his horse's neck, and mentally praying for forgiveness for the falsehood. "Why, we should be very much disappointed if you didn't all come; the more the merrier. I hope you will think better of it, and change your mind."

The very insincerity of his appeal made him throw an unnecessary earnestness into his voice. Lavinia, however, detected no false ring. A quick flood of color rushed to her cheeks.

"I should like to go," she said, not venturing to meet his eyes.

"Very well, then that's settled," he said lightly. "Remember, I shall expect to see you on Wednesday night. Good-bye again."

He lifted his hat, and in a few moments was out of sight.

"Well! upon my word, Lavinia," exclaimed Rebecca-Mary, "you might have had more sense than to say what you did!"

"Why, what else could I say?" retorted Lavinia.

"What else could he say, you mean," answered her sister; "the way you put it, he was bound to ask you to go. And what are you going to do for a dress, I should like to know? You'd disgrace us all if you went in your old rag of a pink thing."

"Never you mind," said Lavinia roughly, "I'll have a dress, never you fear!"

* * * * * *

The night of the Barrys' ball, Lavinia stood in her room, looking down at herself in wonderment. Her small looking-glass was not large enough to reflect the whole of her glory at a time, but she had overcome this difficulty by looking at herself in detachments; sitting down first of all to admire the fringe which she had

with great trouble curled over her forehead; then rising to her feet so as to fully see the beauties of her white satin bodice; and lastly standing upon a chair to get the effect of her crisp little skirts, at the imminent risk of being set on fire by the two candles which cast a flickering, inadequate light on the dressing-table. Lavinia hardly recognized herself in these fragmentary visions of splendor, and only that the certainty of her own identity was brought home to her by the tightness of her new satin shoes, would have been inclined to exclaim with the old woman of nursery rhyme celebrity: "O dear a mercy, this is none o' I!"

But there was no time now to waste on metaphysical speculations of the kind. She could hear Mina and Rebecca-Mary rustling downstairs and calling to Biddy for their cloaks and wraps. She unlocked the little mahogany box, to take out the garnet brooch which was her one and only piece of jewelry. But there was a folded slip of paper in the box as well, and as she picked up the brooch, her eyes fell upon it, not without a momentary pang of regret.

In spite of her haste she took it out and unfolded it. It was a very ordinary document. Merely a receipt in the usual shopkeeper's hieroglyphs from Peter Robinson, Oxford Street, London: "To one ball costume, $30 00."

But to Lavinia it meant a great deal. It represented many searchings of heart on her own part, many wordy battles with Peter Growney the herd, who with tears in his eyes had besought her not to lose a certain two pounds at the very least by selling the Herefordshire calf before the November fair. But Lavinia, with the glamor of Cuthbert Barry's manner still over her, had been reckless.

She could not go to the ball without a new dress, a dress worthy of the occasion, and that dress could only be obtained at the sacrifice of the calf; so prudence and Peter Growney's councils were cast to the winds, and the whole of Lavinia's capital was now represented by that receipted bill and the evanescent glory of her ball-dress.

Lavinia unfolded it and replaced it in the box with a sigh from the practical, and a blush from the romantic side of her nature.

"I'm coming," she called in answer to screams from her sisters in the hall; and wrapping a white knitted shawl round her shoulders she ran downstairs.

"My gracious! Lavinia, what a swell you are," exclaimed Mina, enviously conscious that her own costume had already borne the brunt of two Militia balls, and was not in its early youth. "Take off your shawl now, and let us have a look at the body."

"Ah! what's the use, girls," expostulated Mrs. Farrell; "sure you'll see it well enough when when we get there, and Kiernan's car's been at the door this half-hour already. We'll be most awfully late as it is."

"Goodness, mamma! we're not asked till ten, and it's only a quarter after nine now," said Mina.

"But it will take us a good hour to drive there, and I wouldn't for anything offend Lady Barry by being unpunctual," replied Mrs. Farrell, putting a stop to all further argument by girding up the skirts of her crimson velveteen to a height more practical than becoming, and leading the way down the steps where Kiernan's car was patiently awaiting them.

Kiernan's car was the only covered vehicle which could be hired for many miles round. It was of a species which though still flourishing in the southern, has almost disappeared from the midland counties of Ireland.

The particular one owned by Mr. Kiernan, and hired this evening by the Farrells, was an exceptional survival, but could hardly be called the survival of the fittest. In appearance it resembled a cut-down prison or penitentiary van on two wheels.

The door at the back by which intending passengers entered was provided with a small window, the only means of ventilation, unless we take into account some large cracks in the front windows, which had been temporarily and inefficiently mended with a couple of Bass & Co.'s adhesive beer labels.

The floor was thickly strewn with straw, the damp musty smell of which mingled in a friendly and confiding way with that of stale tobacco, a reminiscence of the last funeral or wedding-party at which the car had been employed.

It was a tight fit for the four ladies, but they were at last packed in, and the door was shut upon them by George Farrell, who breathed a prayer of thankfulness that the absolute impossibility of the vehicle containing another person saved him from the drive of six miles and the subsequent festivities.

It cannot be said that Lavinia enjoyed the drive. It was her first ball, and her ideas on the etiquette required on such an occasion were vague in the extreme.

She had time during the hour of swaying and jolting over rutty roads to pass through many stages of nervousness, and as Kiernan's car drew up at the Barrys' door, she had reached the point of wishing that she might go home, or at any rate be left in the seclusion of the car until the moment came for guests to depart.

Something of this feeling she ventured to express to Rebecca-Mary, next whom she was sitting; but the idea was received with a scornful scream of laughter.

"Go home! and you invited specially by Captain Barry! and your brand new dress and all! Don't be a fool, Lavinia! Anyhow, you're next the door, and you must just get out, and let us go into the house, whatever you mean to do yourself afterwards."

Lavinia obeyed meekly, and followed her more courageous sister to the ladies' dressing room, which with its long pier glass, and two attendants in frilled aprons oppressed her with an overwhelming sense of inferiority, and incongruity with her surroundings.

A tall girl in a yellow dress, with rippled hair, the color of a ripe chestnut, and a supple graceful figure, moved away from the glass as the Farrells entered, and escorted by a portly gray-haired mother, whose black velvet bodice twinkled with diamond brooches, flattered from the room. Lavinia followed her with admiring eyes, and then turned to the glass.

Was it the contrast of her own solid proportions with those of the girl just reflected by it, or was the glass one of those malevolent mirrors which act the part of the too candid friend, telling nothing but unpleasant truths?

Lavinia could not put it into words, but certainly her heart within her cried, "Ichabod!" The glory was departed from the costume which she had so lately looked at in her own room with pride and satisfaction. Kiernan's car had done much to rob her skirts of their first fresh crispness. Her waist looked clumsy, and her arms and neck glowed scarlet, in contrast to the shining white satin bodice.

Her carefully curled fringe had suffered from the night air, and had become rebelliously straight here and there; and the white gloves into which her hands had with difficulty been thrust, had burst their upper buttons and showed an alarming tendency to do likewise across the knuckles.

"Now, Lavinia, if you're quite done admiring your grandeur, I'll trouble you to let me see how my dress looks after the squashing you gave it coming along in the car."

Rebecca-Mary's sharp voice woke Lavinia from the painful trance into which she had fallen, and she moved aside to make room for her sister, which with none of Lavinia's sense of failure, shook out her pink skirts, pulled out the crushed lace on her bodice and pinned her bunch of flowers in more securely.

After the dreadful ordeal of shaking hands with her hostess was over, Lavinia followed her mother up the ball-room, as closely as the long train of the crimson velveteen would allow her, and when at last Mrs. Farrell came to a convenient anchorage in an arm-chair, Lavinia stood beside her leaning against the wall, and feeling as though she had suddenly become possessed of more arms and hands than she knew what to do with.

The violin and double bass were tuning up with groans and rasping scrawks, and the pianist was doing his best to prevent them arriving at any sort of unanimity by playing a series of brilliant running passages and arpeggios, either to exercise his fingers preparatory to his night's work, or to impress such of the guests as had arrived with a sense of his absolute command of his instrument.

There were not as yet many people in the room, and the few there were, were not among Lavinia's acquaintances, so that she was able to take in and admire in a bewildered way the brilliant lights and the profusion of flowers, and to wonder how anyone was going to dance safely on a floor polished to such a degree that even to walk across it was a difficulty.

As her eye wandered round, it fell on a group at the farther end of the room. Close to an open doorway draped with heavy portieres, stood the girl Lavinia had noticed in the dressing room, and beside her, looking down at her, programme in hand, was Cuthbert Barry.

Something she said amused him, for he laughed, and beckoned to his sister, who, with a little anxious pucker between her eyebrows, was trying to find something pleasant to say to the over-punctual guests who were scattered here and there on the sofas and chairs ranged round the sides of the room.

Miss Barry moved over to her brother, and laid her hand on his arm, and Lavinia saw him cast a hasty glance across the room and shake his head. At this moment the double bass and violin suddenly ceased from troubling, and the piano was for an instant at rest, and in the comparative stillness Lavinia thought she heard Miss Barry say in a rather annoyed voice:

"Well, as you won't, I suppose I must."

She saw Cuthbert shrug his shoulders, and return to his interrupted conversation, while his sister sailed across the open space of polished floor and stopped beside Mrs. Farrell's arm-chair.

"So glad to see you," she said, with polite empressement; "you are very courageous people to face the long drive. Had you any tea, Mrs. Farrell? Our gentlemen are all very fashionably late, but if you will allow me to escort you, I shall be delighted to get you some."

"Oh, don't trouble yourself, Miss Barry," responded Mrs. Farrell, her face expanding into a capacious smile. "I don't want anything to drink yet awhile—we're only just after our tea ourselves."

Miss Barry swallowed with difficulty her inclination to laugh.

"Quite sure?" she questioned; "it would be no trouble, I assure you. Well, then I must go and tell the band to begin. It is quite time to start the real business of the evening, don't you think so?" and with a friendly nod, she moved off. She soon returned, however, bearing in her wake her school-boy brother Bob, whom she had ruthlessly reft from a coign of vantage behind the double-bass, where he had ensconced himself, hoping thus to escape his sister's eye and commands to duty.

"Mrs. Farrell," she said, stopping opposite Lavinia, "may I introduce my brother."

Lavinia's face assumed a brighter shade of scarlet, and she half put out her hand, and then hastily withdrew it, as Bob showed no sign of wishing to take it, but bowed stiffly and muttered something about "the pleasure of a dance," and taking Lavinia's silence for consent, continued: "May I have number ten, if you have it to spare?" then, hardly waiting to hear her answer, turned on his heel, and fled precipitately.

The room was gradually filling, and Rebecca-Mary and Mina, who at first had gazed rather blankly at unknown faces, and had made mental calculations of a depressing nature as to their chances of partners, brightened visibly, as among the later arrivals they espied several former swains of Militia Ball memory, whom they looked upon as a sure and certain prey.

Nor were they mistaken, and Lavinia was glad to see them borne off by their faithful cavaliers, as she was thereby enabled to sink into a seat beside her mother, where she felt more comfortably unconspicuous than when standing.

The dances went on, and Lavinia's head grew dizzy as couple after couple swept by her, displaying their steps in every variety of style; for a country ball brings to the surface all sorts and conditions of steps, descending from the smooth modern glide, through various compromises to the plain unvarnished energy of the deuxtemps.

But Lavinia was not critical. She did not possess even the small amount of knowledge necessary to being so, and she was only filled with a dazzled amazement, under which lurked a half formed wish tha Captain Barry would speak to her.

Unconsciously, she singled him out of the revolving crowd, and watched him as he moved round in slow rhythmical circles, his partner's dress often brushing her foot as she passed. But it was not till after the seventh or eighth dance that her wish was realized.

The music had ceased temporarily, and Cuthbert was filing out of the room with the rest of the crowd, his partner, the girl in yellow, on his arm, when a block in the doorway brought him to a stand still exactly in front of the Farrells. He rose to the emergency, and after greeting Mrs. Farrell, he turned to Lavinia.

"I am so glad you changed your mind and came after all, Miss Farrell," he said. "Can you give me a dance? number ten?"

"I'm sorry, I'm engaged for that one, Captain Barry," said Lavinia stammeringly.

"Really, that is too bad! I'm afraid I'm booked right through, except for that one—it serves me right though for coming so late. I hope I may have better luck another time."

Then turning to his partner:

"I think we shall be able to force a passage now—shall we try?"

Mrs. Farrell looked after their retreating figures.

"Well, I suppose I'm not up to grand society ways, but 'pon me word, in my day balls were more lively things than this. You wouldn't see well-dressed girls like you, Lavinia, sitting stuck up against the wall night long, with no one to ask them to dance."

"Sure I don't know anyone here," said Lavinia humbly.

"Well, that's true," assented Mrs. Farrell, nodding her head. "And I'm told introducing is out of fashion. It's a queer thing," she continued, with a pride chastened by the extreme dullness of her high position, "it's a queer thing, but I don't see a soul I know to speak to, and mighty few I know even by sight. I wonder now where's Rebecca-Mary and Mina?"

"They're with the officers. I saw them go out through that door a while ago," said Lavinia choking down a yawn.

"Ah, well, leave them so," ejaculated Mrs. Farrell, with a placid smile of motherly satisfaction which changed to a look of lively interest when she perceived that after a few moments' consultation with Miss Barry the pianist hung out the announcement "First Supper Extra" over the corner of the piano and struck up a noisy polka.

When some little time later Cuthbert Barry came and bore her off to the supper room, the culminating point of her satisfaction was reached, and in her elation she gave but little thought to Lavinia left stranded and alone.

It had been bad enough for Lavinia before, but now that she was deserted by her mother she gathered all her courage together, and as the music ended she stood up, and mingling with the throng of dancers, passed unnoticed out of the ball-room into the cool hall filled with the scent of datura and cytisus which came in great wafts of perfume through the open glass doors of the conservatory at the far end.

Lavinia's headache from the heat and glare of the ball-room, and the coolness and semi-darkness of the dimly-lighted conservatory offered just the haven of rest she was longing for.

She slipped quietly in, and walking to the far end, found two artfully-disposed basket chairs under the shadow of palms and some tall tree ferns. She sank into one of them with a little groan of fatigue, and throwing back her head among the cushions closed her hot lids.

Several couples, intent on securing a quiet corner, seeing the glimmer of her white dress, retired hastily with some irritation at having been forestalled, but Lavinia neither heard nor saw them. She was conscious of nothing except the relief of a momentary escape from the dazzle of the lights, the din of the dance music, and the never-ending gyrations of the dancers.

Every now and then she caught a distant note, but it did not interfere with the soothing splash of the little fountain in the centre of the conservatory and the rustle of the wind in the trees outside. She could not have told how long she had been there lying with closed eyes, when the stillness was broken by two voices, one of which struck her with a sudden spasm of recognition. She could hear the creak of the basket chairs at the other side of a leafy screen of creepers and large tropical plants as the new-comers seated themselves. Then Cuthbert Barry's voice:

"Well, no one can't say I haven't done my duty like a man," he began. "I've seen that old lady through a supper which, if it doesn't kill her, ought to last her the rest of her natural life. My word, how she did put away the lobster salad!"

"Which particular old lady?" asked a girl's voice, with a little laugh.

"That woman in red velvet with the enormous mosaic brooch. Still, after all, my task was a light one compared with what is before poor Bob. He has to dance with the daughter, that girl I asked for number ten."

"Ah, to be sure! I remember at the time thinking you looked rather relieved when she said she was engaged."

"Oh! I had carefully prepared my escape, I can tell you. I knew she was engaged to Bob for that dance."

"It was rather a cheap civility then."

There was a certain tone of reproof in the girl's voice.

"Don't be severe on me," apologised Cuthbert, and Lavinia, listening now with painful interest, could easily picture to herself the look which accompanied the words

"Really, they are quite impossible people. They did us a good turn the other day when Moll and I came to grief in the trap near their house, and we asked them here as a return civility. I have danced with one of the girls, and have taken the old mother down to supper, but really you could see for yourself that that girl—— Why, it would want Hercules himself to drag her round!"

"Ah, poor thing!" There was a note of genuine sympathy which went straight to Lavinia's heart.

"Do you know I think 'impossible people' as you call them, always attract me in a curious sort of way. Several times this evening as I looked across the room and saw that poor plain girl sitting out dance after dance and not opening her lips even to her mother, I wished I were a man that I might go and ask her for a dance. Probably she has been looking forward to this ball with the greatest delight ever since she got her invitation, and unless she is differently made from any other girl, it must have been one vast disappointment."

"I never thought of it in that light," said Cuthbert, humbly. "But I say, look here, Helen, I didn't bring you here to talk of the Farrells; there was something quite different I wanted to tell you."

He hesitated and cleared his throat nervously, and there was a shakiness in his voice as he went on:

"You are such a good hand at lecturing me, won't you take me in hand altogether? Don't say 'No' before you hear me out," he went on hurriedly, as though fearing to be interrupted. "Ever since I was quite a little chap——"

But here Lavinia's slumbering sense of honor suddenly awoke to the fact that she was listening to a conversation she had no right to hear, and stuffing her fingers into her ears, she buried her face in her knees.

It was long before she ventured to stir.

When at last she raised her head, there was no sound in the conservatory but the never-tiring splash of the fountain. Her head throbbed painfully, and it was with difficulty she kept the tears from starting to her eyes, for the few sympathetic words which the unseen girl spoke, had shown her the pathos of her own position more clearly than she could have imagined it for herself.

She rose stiffly from her seat, and mechanically found her way back into the hall. It was now deserted; a cotillon was going on in the dancing-room, and even those who were actually dancing were looking on. Except that she found herself a seat and remained there until discovered later on by her mother and sisters, she could remember nothing distinctly of the rest of the evening.

It was a confused blur of music and moving figures with whom she seemed to have no connection. Her slow mind had gone through a series of emotions, whose very unsustainess was confusing.

To attempt to disentangle them was not within the scope of her mental powers, and she was too humble by nature, and her long course of home-snubbing, to feel anger against anyone.

There was nothing left her but the dull consciousness that she had been a fool. Peter Growney had told her as much when he had brought her the price of the Herefordshire calf, "and 'deed," thought poor Lavinia, "he said no more than the truth."

This was the depressing "motif" which rang its changes through her tired brain as she leaned back in the corner of Kiernan's car on the way home and watched with a sort of dull fascination the befeathered and spangled cap, which had been the crowning glory of Mrs. Farrell's costume, assuming little by little a rakish slew over one ear as Mrs. Farrell nodded in stertorous slumber to the swaying of the vehicles, and finally freeing itself from the last restraining hair-pin, leaping like Marcus Curtius into the black abysses below.

It had not occured to Biddy to tidy the bedroom at such an abnormal hour as nine o'clock in the evening, so that when Lavinia entered hers, there was still the general litter of her preparations for the ball lying about, her day dress hanging over the back of a chair where she had flung it in her haste and excitement, the packet of hairpins open on the table, and the little mahogany jewel-box as she had left it, with the corner of Peter Robinson's receipt peeping out at one side.

The chilly gray morning light was forcing its way through the cracks of the shutters making everything in the room look wan and melancholy. Lavinia, as she put her flickering candle down on her dressing-table, looked round her and shuddered.

Even to her unimaginative mind the room was haunted by the ghost of the poor little romance that had brightened her dull life for the space of a few days, and as she smoothed out the crumpled frills of her little skirt and laid it tenderly on the shelf of her press, beside the white satin bodice, she felt as a mother might who shuts away from her sight the little pair of shoes or the holland pinafore which speak to her too plainly of past hopes, present loss, and a blank and dreary future.

HABITS OF WILD GEESE.

OBJECTS which never fail just now to attract the attention of travelers over western Kansas are flocks of wild geese feeding upon the rich fields of wheat, which this spring seem to spread a carpet of green over all the broad domain. To rest and refresh themselves in their annual flight northward, the geese alight in these fields.

They select their ground carefully, choosing a spot remote from human habitation and so situated that they may see all the country around about, and thus be warned by the approach of danger in time to take flight.

In their migrations northward in the early spring and southward in the late fall, wild geese fly in families of a dozen or twenty, arranging themselves in the form of the letter "A," one side of the letter invariably shorter than the other, and the father gander and the mother goose a little in advance of the apex.

Sometimes many families unite for a time and travel together, but always that inevitable letter "A" is clearly defined in the sky, the procession led by a gander who has traveled the road before, and whose "honk! honk!" guides the flight.

While feeding every family posts a sentinel, who stands in the midst of the feeding flock, his neck stretched high, fixed and rigid as a statue.

Traveling over the Rock Island railroad from Topeka to Hutchinson, a newspaper man witnessed this spectacle of patience and faithfulness, and saw, too, an attempt by a farmer boy to steal upon the flock with a gun.

The passengers crowded to the windows or hastened to the car platforms, and the engineer, also interested, slowed down the train to a creep. The boy crept down a draw to a point nearest the geese and then began to work his way over a rise.

The boy was to leeward, so the sentinel could not be warned by scent, and the enemy had not yet got into view. Slowly the boy toiled his way, his body flat against the ground.

Finally he had dragged himself to a point where he could see the geese feeding over a radius of twenty yards from the sentinel, and moving slowly in the direction of the boy.

He had only to be patient, and his reward would be a brace of wild geese. But he possessed a boy's curiosity. He raised his head to look.

"Quack, quack!" sounded the warning of the sentinel. All was excitement in the camp, the sentinel ran, knowing that there was danger, the others of the family following.

After a dash of thirty yards they rose in the air, but flying low, the sentinel's guiding "honk!" ahead of them. At the quack of the sentinel the boy rose and gave chase, but the geese were too fleet of foot and too far away when they took wing and the boy's shot fell short of his aim.

The geese were in wild disordor when they lifted themselves into the air, but after that not a sound was heard save from the sentinel, whose notes soon became reassuring, and before they had flown a quarter of a mile they were high in the sky, and, behold! there was the never-failing letter "A."

Then the silent and inspired spectators from the train, which was now moving rapidly, witnessed another spectacle. The danger past, the sentinel which had been in the lead dropped back and took his position at the end of the longer arm of the letter "A," while from that position the father of the family pushed to the head of the column and from the end of the shorter arm the mother goose flew forward and joined him.

Until that moment they had been flying in southwesterly direction, but "honk! honk!" commanded the leader, and they whirled to the northward and soon were lost to view.

THE SERGEANT'S PET.—Sergeant Richard Norris was a member of Company I, First Maine Cavalry. He had been an English soldier. He loved the cavalry service, and was a skilled horseman.

He took great pride in his cavalry hat, and always went into fight bareheaded, removing his hat from his head, and placing it inside his shirt-bosom—about the only place where he could bestow it.

Norris, when asked the reason for his fighting bareheaded, always replied that the "rebs." had ruined one hat by shooting through it, and he did not intend they should destroy another in like manner.

In the midst of a fight one day, while dismounted, the sergeant came upon a young squirrel at the foot of a tree paralyzed by fright or confused by the noise. Hastily picking him up, he placed him in his hat, and his hat in its usual battle-place.

After the battle was over, he had opportunity to feed and care for his squirrel. The good fellow's heart—he was then forty-five years of age—seemed to open fully to the squirrel as the first thing in his life that he could care for, watch over, and love.

All his spare moments were spent in feeding, petting, and caring for his squirrel. He would sit for hours stroking its soft fur and talking to it.

He would tell and retell to his pet the dimensions and architecture of the mansion he designed to build for him after the war was over, of the dining-room below, the nice chamber above, with a gymnasium at one side, the kind of wood he would use in constructing the house, and the colors of the paints used to adorn the building.

Generally, when we moved, the squirrel occupied his pockets, or rested on his shoulders, or roamed his body at will; but in every fight, when the hat came off, into it went the squirrel, and both were pressed close to his heart.

In battle after battle both the squirrel and hat went safely through the showers of lead, till at Reams Station a bullet pierced hat and squirrel, and the warm blood of the squirrel flowed down the soldier's side. The good fellow was nearly heart-broken.

The turrets and revolving courts of the squirrel mansion lay wrecked and ruined in mid-air. He carried him for a day or so, and then, though the hushed ranks of his comrades, withdrew to bury him.

As he rose, with tears in his eyes, and took up his mutilated hat, he tried to choke down his grief by saying, "My dear old hat, I do not know where I can carry you safely now!"

The next day Sergeant Norris was badly wounded, but his manner showed that he regarded the incident merely as an ordinary and expected one.

MURGER.—The following anecdote is told of Murger, the French poet. One day he wrote to a friend—"I have not a farthing; this is why I am walking about barefooted. I am waiting for news from Russia."

It appears that at the time of the marriage of one of the daughters of the Emperor Nicholas, an Italian, whose acquaintance he had made at the house of Count Tolstoi, his patron, conceived the idea of sending to his Majesty a nuptial poem in honor of the event, for which he hoped to get a check from the Imperial treasury.

Unable to compose the poem correctly in French, he appealed to Murger to help him, and the latter consented on the understanding that he should have half of the sum it produced. It was superbly printed and sent to the Czar through the intermediation of the Russian Ambassador. It was on the Emperor's response that Murger reckoned to rescue him from his impecuniosity.

Time rolled on, and he began to despair, when the news came that his Majesty had written to Count Tolstoi to ask him whether the Italian would like a present or money. The Italian preferred a present. This astonished Murger, who knew that he was, like himself, in want of money; but the mystery was soon explained.

The present, which consisted of a gold ring set with diamonds, no sooner arrived than the wily Italian sold it; but, instead of fairly dividing the proceeds with Murger, he gave him only a quarter of them, pretending that that was all the poet was entitled to. Had he accepted money, he would not have been able to cheat Murger out of his due share.

At Home and Abroad.

Libraries are sometimes truly conservators of knowledge. University Extension Lecturer W. Hudson Shaw remarked the other night at Association Hall, Philadelphia, that for the first time in his experience a student had read every book mentioned in the syllabus of one of his lectures. "One of the books," he added, "was obtained by this student at the Mercantile Library, where it had lain upon the shelves for 82 years without having the pages cut.

The promenaders along the Avenue de la Gare, Nice, witnessed a somewhat curious spectacle recently. A bicyclist, carrying a baby clothed in white, and followed by nearly fifty persons, men, women, and children, all on cycles, made his way to the Church of Notre Dame, where the ceremony of baptising the baby was gone through. After this the whole party remounted their machines and rode to the house of the infant's father, where a reception was held.

Norway is small, and the sayings and doings of its people do not get into newspaper type very often, but the Norwegians, nevertheless, have a claim upon celebrity owing to the fact that the average length of life is greater in their country than in any other European one. Recent statistics show that for males the average is 48 years and 3 months, and for females it is 51 years and 3 months. It is a valuable commentary on this that the mortality in Norway is 17 per cent. less than in the centre or west of Europe.

Three of the largest olive groves in the world are being planted in Southern California. One grove, of 400 acres, in Orange county, will contain 40,000 trees. Another near Colton, will have 34,000 trees, and a third, near Pomona, will have 24,000 trees. There is more olive planting in California this season than at any previous time, the boom being due to the increased popularity of California olives in American markets. The olive crop of Southern California last season was worth $120,000, and the growers say that three times the amount of fruit could have been sold.

New interest has been awakened in Great Britain concerning the utilization of steam-power and existing railways for the rapid transport of heavy guns, to be afterwards fired from the line. This problem of railway batteries and armored trains should have a kindred interest for America, where the area of sea coast and border defense is greater than that of any Continental nation. For nearly half a century the question of how best to use ordinary railways, as well as specially prepared military lines, for the transport of heavy artillery, capable of being brought into action upon the rails has engaged the attention of foreign artillerymen and engineers. In America to day the extension of the railway system is more favorable to experiments with railway batteries than the railroad status of the Old World to European trials.

The great Sahara desert of Africa is regarded as the hottest region in the world. The vast plain—which extends 3,400 miles from east to west, and 900 from north to south—has a temperature of 150 degrees Fahrenheit in the hottest days of summer. It is said that the caravans, which usually consist of from 500 to 2,000 camels, with their assistants, experience great suffering through the intense heat and the deprivation of water, as the distance between wells very often exceeds ten days. There are numerous instances on record where whole tribes have perished from thirst, as the wells and springs to which they had journeyed had been dried up by the heat. It would be impossible for anyone but the acclimatised Moors, Berbers and Arabs to live, even for a day, in the heart of the rainless Sahara. In spite of the fact that the days are extremely hot, the nights are nearly always uncomfortably cold, and the travelers are obliged to burden themselves with blankets in order to endure the change.

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Our Young Folks.

THE PIG WITH A STRAIGHT TAIL.

BY H. F. L.

THERE was once a pig who came into the world with a straight tail; but at first nobody noticed that there was anything peculiar about him. He ran here and there like other little pigs, and cried, "Quee! quee! quee!" after the manner of his race in youth.

When he was about three months old, however, his mother, the old sow, made an astounding discovery.

"Well, I never!" she exclaimed; "Alfred has a straight tail! That is probably a sign that he is going to become somebody in particular. His career will doubtless be an exceptional one."

The Dorking hen passed by, and the sow called at her.

"Have you observed it?" she asked.

"Observed what?" said the Dorking hen.

"Alfred's tail. It is quite straight."

"Pooh!" answered the Dorking hen, scratching up an earwig and devouring it. "That's nothing unusual. I've had heaps of pullets with straight tails."

Earwigs always disagreed with the Dorking hen, and made her cross and contemptuous.

"I'm not talking about pullets," said the sow sharply; "I'm talking about pigs."

"Well, I cannot trouble my head with these fine distinctions," clucked the Dorking hen. "I have my living to gain, you must understand. And speaking of that, I wish you would trouble yourself to get up for a minute. It is just possible that you are sitting on another earwig."

The sow rose in disgust, and waddled over to the cart horse, who stood lazily flicking the flies off his back in the shadow of the barn.

"You know my son Alfred?" began the sow.

"There are so many of them," answered the cart horse, with languid interest. "And they all look much alike when they are sniffing at a person's heels," he added.

"But Alfred has a straight tail."

"Has it hairs a yard long on the end of it?" inquired the cart horse, politely stifling a yawn.

"Of course it hasn't," said the sow. "What a ridiculous question!"

"Then it won't be much use to him in fly time, straight or curly," said the cart horse.

And with that he closed his eyes and dropped into a deep doze. The sow rambled on, grumbling and grunting as she went.

"They have no sympathy at all with the feelings of a mother," she snorted. "I'm afraid this farmyard is inhabited by a dreadfully callous lot of people."

There was a rattle of hoofs behind her as the calf frisked up.

"I was round the corner when you had that conversation with the cart horse," declared the calf. "What was the discussion about? I distinctly heard everything you said, but I couldn't quite catch it."

"That's a bull," observed the sow.

"Why not?" retorted the calf flippantly. "I'm a bull calf."

"Well, I was telling the cart horse about my son's straight tail," said the sow, pleased to return to her favorite topic. "That's an uncommon sort of tail for a pig to possess, you see, and in my opinion it will lead to something."

"It's certain to, if your son walks backward," chuckled the calf, throwing his hind legs into the air. "Excuse my high spirits, won't you?"

"I would lower both my spirits and my heels, if I were in your place," indignantly answered the sow, who was much offended by the calf's frivolous treatment of what was to her a most serious subject.

The calf gamboiled off, while the sow trudged on to the pond, to have a few words with the Aylesbury duck.

"Are you anything of an authority on tails?" queried the sow.

"What kind of tails?" said the Aylesbury duck.

"Pigs' tails—straight pigs' tails," replied the sow anxiously.

"I'm sorry I can't supply you with information concerning them," quacked the Aylesbury duck. "It would have been a totally different affair if you had wanted to consult me about tadpoles' tails."

So saying, the Aylesbury duck turned a half somersault, and remained so long with her head under water that the sow grew tired of waiting for her to resume a natural position.

"If I speak to her, she can't hear me while she is upside down," muttered the sow. "It would really be unwise to waste any more time on so topsy-turvy a creature."

So the sow wandered along till she met the shepherd's dog, who greeted her with the courtesy of a dog of the world.

"A fine day, Mr. Towzer," said the sow. "You have been a great traveler in your time, haven't you?"

"Yes; indeed," answered the shepherd's dog, with conviction in his tones. "Why, I have frequently journeyed as far as our market town."

"And have you ever in your travels come across a pig with a straight tail?"

"Never," reluctantly admitted the shepherd's dog; "but I once saw a monkey in our market town, and it isn't everybody who sees as much as that, I can assure you."

"What's a monkey?" inquired the sow.

"It's an animal that goes about with a music making machine they call an organ," loftily explained the shepherd's dog. "The one I saw was dressed like a man, in a red coat and blue trousers."

"How splendid!" murmured the sow. "And had it a straight tail?"

"Oh, yes," said the shepherd's dog. "It ran up a lamp post and hung by its tail from the bar, and I noticed that its tail was as straight as a rope."

"Then that settles it, and it is as I expected!" cried the sow, whose brain commenced to whirl as she thought of these wonders. "When Alfred is fully grown, I suppose he also will run up lamp posts and hang from bars—in a red coat and blue trousers—to the strains of music. What distinction!"

At this juncture the farmer's lad came running past. He was talking excitedly to himself.

"That there clumsy calf have been an' kicked one o' they young pigs into the well, and the poor thing's drowned," he panted. "Whatever will master say, I wonder?"

When the sow overheard these words, she felt herself growing pale under her bristles.

"Goodness me!" she exclaimed. "It may be Alfred!"

Without stopping to take leave of the shepherd's dog, she bundled off to the sty, where she discovered her piglings collected together, all with very grave faces. In great distress of mind she counted them, and found them one short.

"Alfred would play with that rough calf, though some of us warned him not to," squealed the little pigs in chorus. "Now he is in the hole where the clean water is."

It was a dreadful blow to the sow, as you may easily imagine; but she had a young family to look after, and when that is the case a mother cannot afford to give way to perpetual grief. But she sorrowed over Alfred for a long, long while, lamenting him as the flower of her litter; though, maybe, if he had lived, he wouldn't have grown up into such a very remarkable porker after all, his straight tail notwithstanding.

A THUNDERSTORM.

BY A. J. F.

"THERE is a thunderstorm coming," said the southwest wind as he blew softly over the corn field.

"Thunderstorm! nonsense," answered the corn, rustling stiffly. "Why, there is hardly a cloud in sight. Poppies, do you hear what he says?"

"Yes," said the poppies, laughing, and opening their petals a little wider to the hot sunshine. "He is only saying it to frighten us. He does not really mean it."

"I do, indeed," answered the wind. "It is fine and sunny this morning, but in an hour or two it will be very different. You had better prepare for a storm."

"Ha, ha!" laughed the poppies, nodding their lovely heads gaily. "Who ever heard of such a thing as a storm coming on a day like this?"

To an inexperienced eye it certainly did not look the sort of a day for a storm. The only clouds to be seen were quite low down, and almost hidden from the sight of the inhabitants of the cornfield by a tall hedge of hawthorn, in which the birds were chirping and twittering merrily.

By the side of this hedge ran a pathway, dry and dusty, across which numbers of ants were hurrying to and fro, heedless of the heat of the August sun which was pouring down upon them.

Two little lizards were lazily basking on the bank beneath the hedge, where a dozen different kinds of wild flowers opened their petals invitingly to the insects which buzzed and hummed around.

Thunderstorm, indeed! It was a ridiculous idea. All the flowers agreed with the corn, in spite of the warning their friend the southwest wind had given them; all but the little scarlet pimpernels growing so close to the ground beside the path.

They did not laugh at the idea, but answered, "Yes, yes, we thought so;" and presently, when the clouds came higher overhead, they began to close their petals. That was their way of preparing for a storm.

But none of the other flowers took any notice or made any preparation for the coming storm; not even when the sun went in, and the clouds grew thicker and darker overhead.

The southwest wind had gone, but the poppies and field daisies laughed at one another amongst the corn, and opened their petals as wide as they would go, defiantly.

Presently it began to rain. In an instant the ants had all disappeared and were safe in their well-built rain-proof nest. The lizards had gone when the sun went in, and the birds had stopped their twittering.

Then came flashes of lightning and deafening crashes and peals of thunder, whilst the rain came down in torrents. It tore the petals off the poppies one after another, and beat them into the ground.

It swept down upon the bees and other insects that still clung to the flowers, knocked them to the ground, and beat upon them till they were dead.

It grew fiercer and stronger till the plants gave way beneath it and fell to the ground. Even the corn, strong as it was, was overcome, and broke down and was crushed and battered by the pitiless rain. The thunder pealed, and the lightning played over the field as if in mockery of the poor things being destroyed therein. And still the rain and hail poured down upon them, battering, mangling, and crushing corn, flowers, and insects.

* * * * * *

Early next morning the southwest wind came sauntering gently along.

"Well, friends," he said cheerfully, "who was right about the thunder storm?"

But no one answered him, and looking round in astonishment, he soon saw the reason why. The beautiful cornfield was laid waste, not a poppy, not a daisy, nor a single corn stalk raised its head from the scene of desolation.

Such a change in one day seemed impossible, and the southwest wind, who had come along laughing to himself at the way in which he would tease the flowers for their disbelief in him yesterday, was struck with dismay.

He blew softly over the poor broken-down corn, whispering encouragement and trying to induce it and the flowers to make an effort to rise, but no one seemed inclined to make the attempt, and at last he went off disheartened.

But about the middle of the day he came again, and the sun shone out, and together they assisted some of the corn to stand up once more.

For as the sun dried up the wet which still clung to them, the wind insinuated himself between the corn stalks and the ground very gently, and one after another raised itself up once more.

But even when the sun and wind together had done all they could, there were still hundreds upon hundreds of cornstalks and flowers lying upon the ground, too much battered and broken to make any attempt to rise.

The little pimpernels had opened their petals and looked as bright as ever, the ants were running here and there, and the birds were singing in the hedge, but the greater part of the field was a scene of desolation; and as the southwest wind thought to himself, but refrained from saying, it was a melancholy warning to all people who refuse to bend before a storm.

IT is common to say that a liar will not be believed although he speaks the truth. The converse of this proposition is equally true, but more unfortunate—that a man who has made a reputation for voracity, will not be discredited though he utter what is false. But he that would make use of a reputation for veracity to establish a lie would set fire to the temple of truth with a fagot which had been stolen from her altar.

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

The word Eskimo means "Raw Fish Eaters."

In Holland no newspapers are issued on Sunday.

The Pacific is fully a mile deeper than any other ocean.

Fully 2,500 persons commit suicide in Russia every year.

In Africa wives are sometimes sold for two packets of hairpins.

Beer costs 25 cents a glass, or $2 a gallon, at Circle City, Alaska.

In all Spanish America the Indians form the great mass of population.

One thousand tons of soot settle monthly within the 118 square miles of London.

Some naturalists say that the whale was once a land animal that took to the water for safety.

An anthropologist says that the ears of women are set further forward on the head than those of men.

Human hair varies in thickness from the two hundred and fiftieth to the six hundreth part of an inch.

Americans use more than 90,000,000 pounds of tea a year, nearly all of which comes from China.

Out of 17,000,000 inhabitants of Spain, more than 11,000,000 are ignorant of the art of reading or writing.

From China $460,000 worth of human hair is exported annually. It comes mostly from the heads of malefactors, paupers and dead people.

A Kansas man who carried his tobacco and cartridges in the same pocket got them mixed when he filled his pipe. He isn't smoking now.

The Siamese have a great horror of odd numbers, and have never been known to put five, seven, nine, or eleven windows in a house or temple.

It is said that certain students in Paris now wear muzzles when perusing the old books in the National Library, so as not to inhale the book microbes.

Nutmegs grow in the Banda Islands. The Dutch once enjoyed a complete monopoly of this spice and supplied the whole of Europe with them.

Two or three species of birds are known to accompany the crocodile whenever he appears above water, and to give the alarm whenever danger appears.

The opening of a door of a room in Lapland during the winter is instantly followed by a miniature snowstorm, the condensed moisture falling in flakes.

In the Dutch West Indies the slaves were emancipated in 1863. It is stated that 46,000 were freed, their owners being compensated at the rate of £32 for each slave.

The wings of the owl are lined with a soft down, that enables the bird to fly without making the slightest sound, a very important matter to a nocturnal bird of prey.

In Assam a curious burial custom exists. All corpses are lowered from the roofs with ropes, it being contrary to the laws of the country to carry a dead body through a door.

Schemnitz is the oldest and most famous mining town in Hungary. The mines have been worked since the time of the Romans, and produce gold and silver, copper and lead.

The hoarding of treasure by the people of India is shown by the fact that in that country the gold and other ornaments now lying idle are estimated to be worth over $1,250,000,000.

A curious notice is to be seen in the street cars of an Illinois town. The wording of it runs thus: "J. N. Blank, Justice of the Peace. Marriage ceremonies performed on short notice."

Karl Goldmark, the Hungarian composer, has added a new opera of the richest orchestral beauty to the lyric stage in his "Cricket on the Hearth." The characteristic chirping of the cricket and the simmering of the tea-kettle form the basis of the overture.

In a nail foundry in Williamsburg, New York, the bellows under the forges are worked by five big mongrel dogs, which labor regularly a little more than an hour and a half each day, feeding and sleeping in the foundry. The animals tread inside a wheel eight feet in diameter.

More than 40,000 sparrows have been destroyed in Gratiot county, Mich., during the past 12 months, as shown by the bounties paid, but the birds appear to be practically as numerous as ever. One man makes a good income as a sparrow hunter, collecting an average of $60 a month in bounties.

The city of Montpelier, in France, is said to be the first to regulate the kind of wrapping paper in which articles of food shall be delivered. Colored paper is absolutely forbidden. Printed paper and old manuscripts may only be used for dried vegetables. For all other articles of food new paper, either white or straw-colored, must be used.

LOVE'S OLD SONG.

BY W. W. LONG.

Play it softly, it is holy,
Love's old silent tune,
Resurrected here in shadows,
By a dead rose of one June.

Sob it sobs in minor music,
Filled with tears,
Where along the silent pathway
Lie the fair dead years.

Play it softly, it is holy,
With the dreams of a fond past,
Resurrected from the shadows
Where love's broken vows were cast.

THE CHINESE THRONE.

After the present Emperor ascended to the throne of China, his government yielded the point and agreed to receive the diplomatic corps in the same manner that they are received by the sovereigns of Europe. The first ceremony of this kind, which took place on March 5, 1891, was an event in Chinese history. The members of the several legations arrived at Fu Hua, or East Flower gate of the forbidden city, at 10 o'clock on that morning in sedan chairs, each escorted by two mounted officers of the imperial guards.

They were there met by the members of the tsung li yamen, who conducted them to the Shih Yung Kung, the temple of the great river god, when they offered tea and sweetmeats. An hour later they were escorted to the Tsu Kuang Ko, or reception hall, a handsome building profusely decorated with gilded coverings and ornamented with gay colors. The hall is approached by eight marble steps, which lead to a broad marble terrace. Around this terrace is a balustrade, supported by numerous pillars of marble, pure white and beautifully engraved.

The emperor arrived about the same time in his chair, which was covered outside and in with yellow silk, the official button on top being gold instead of silver, and the ends of the bearing poles being elaborately carved and capped with gilded dragons.

The dean of the diplomatic corps, escorted by members of the foreign office, was conducted into the hall, the sides of the approach to the steps, the steps themselves and the terrace being crowded with eunuchs employed in the place, and civil and military officers whose rank did not entitle them to enter the presence of the emperor.

Each member of the diplomatic corps was given a separate audience by the emperor, who was seated upon a marble throne. As they crossed the threshold they bowed, advanced three or four paces and bowed again, then advanced to a point between the two dragon pillars, where a third stop and bow was made. There a foreign carpet covered the floor of the platform, which was about three feet high. Three flights of steps ascended to the platform, one in the middle and one at each end.

The ambassadors and ministers stopped about twelve feet from the emperor, where they made their speeches, which were translated by an interpreter into Chinese. They then advanced and handed letters of credence to Prince Ching, who had been standing on the left of the emperor.

Taking the papers he ascended the steps, approached the table in front of the emperor and laid them upon it, not kneeling until he had deposited them. The emperor replied to the speeches in the Manchu dialect after the diplomatists had returned to their places between the dragon pillars, his remarks being translated into Chinese by Prince Ching, sentence by sentence. The exit from the hall was made by walking backward, with bows at three places.

Within the pink walls that surrounded the forbidden city are several temples and forty or more palaces and other buildings which are occupied as residences by the emperor's immediate attendants and officers of the guard. They are all of one story and of uniform architecture, differing only in dimensions. Their exteriors are painted that peculiar white which Europeans have never been able to imitate and roofed with tiles of imperial yellow.

The Fu Hua, or East Flower gate, is reached from the Tartar city by passing over a marble bridge handsomely decorated and bearing several tablets with inscriptions that betoken long life, prosperity, happiness and other blessings.

Immediately before the gates are the western gardens, handsomely laid out in the highest taste and skill in landscape architecture and surrounding a lake that covers several acres. The nearest temple is dedicated to the great river god, and there the emperor offers sacrifices to appease that disorderly joss, who is responsible for the floods which so frequently devastate the lowlands of northern China.

About the ground are stationed thousands of imperial guards, who are distinguished by their yellow tunics and violet cloaks. They have a series of uniforms, which are changed at intervals by the emperor's orders.

VARIETIES IN COURTING.—"Probably there is no instance," said Sir Arthur Helps, "in which two lovers have made love exactly in the same way as any other two lovers, since the world began." Such statement is very true.

Barkis insinuated, Vivien charmed Merlin, Alexander made a bonfire for Thais. Bassanio soft-soldered Portia with a leaden casket. The garrulous female in the Arabian Nights told her husband stories. Hippomenes had a close race for Atalanta, but he played an apple-game on her.

In the Polynesian Islands they win their hearts by beating their heads with a shillelagh. Harry the Eighth and Bluebeard were off with the head of the old love before they were on with the new. Newton poked down the tobacco in his pipe with his sweetheart's finger—a warm token of affection!

Tristram did it with the harp, and was likewise a good liar. His two Isoldes were too many for him. Bothwell was inclined to Mary, and locked her up in his castle. Romilly, the famous lawyer, killed himself because his wife died, while a good many others kill themselves because they will not die.

Nicholas of Russia wanted to "pop" at a dinner table, but didn't like to be caught at it, so he imbedded a ring in a lump of bread, and handed it to the lady.

Charlemagne's secretary was caught by a snowstorm flirting with the emperor's daughter at night, and she carried him home on her back, so that his footsteps shouldn't be traced. The emperor heard of it, and saddled him on to her for the balance of her life.

Grains of Gold.

Nothing grows so fast as trouble that is nursed.

Much doing is not so important as well doing.

Life has always action; it is our own fault if it ever be dull.

The man who quarrels with his lot makes it harder.

Gold is never so bright as when it is used in doing good.

Time's chisel deepens the mark every time there is a frown upon the face.

Those who wrong others, generally slander them to cover their own infamy.

Selfishness is self robbery, no matter whether it dwells in a hut or in a palace.

It costs us more to be miserable than would serve to make us perfectly happy.

Force may subdue, but love gains; he, therefore, that forgives first, wins the laurel.

It is the man who is least willing to practice, who finds the most fault with the preaching.

No greater mistake can be made than to make the accumulation of riches the first business of life.

Noble souls come slowly and with difficulty to believe in evil feelings, in betrayal, in ingratitude; but when their education in this matter is accomplished then they rise to a pity which is, perhaps, the highest reach of contempt for humanity.

Femininities.

There is only one sudden death among women to every eight among men.

Florence: What is the first thing you have to learn in golf? Marion: What to wear.

Love is a beautiful kind of hypnotism, sometimes brought on by perfumes and cosmetics.

Nearly one-half of the total population of the earth live in China, India and Japan.

That rosy flush upon her face as she comes to meet you may be due to a tight corset, or it may have come in a round tin box.

An ice marriage took place recently in Holland. A couple were married on the frozen Zuyder Zee, the ceremony being followed by a dance on skates.

Little boy: Isn't fathers queer? Auntie: In what manner? Little boy: When a little boy does anything for his papa he doesn't get anything; but if another man's boy does it he gets a penny.

Mrs. Fannie R. Allen, of Athol, Mass., who is 75 years old, recently took unto herself a new husband. This is somewhat remarkable in view of the fact that the bride is a great-grandmother.

Chinese mothers are said to often turn their girl babies over to the hucksters, who hawk them about the streets in a basket, selling them for an insignificant price. Mothers of infant sons buy these girl babies and rear them as future daughters in-law.

President Twing, of the Western Reserve University, who has been investigating the subject, places the number of graduates from American colleges and universities at about 300,000. Of these about 150,000 are now living.

A recent very young and much-indulged bride had twenty-six bridesmaids to attend her. Not all stood at the altar, ten occupying front pews. But the procession of young women preceded her entrance, and sixteen surrounded her throughout the ceremony.

Mrs. Anna Mullin, of Chicago, is at the head of a large commission business, where she employs a great number of people, having two stenographers to look after her correspondence. She went into the work on the death of her husband, simply taking the place he had left.

The latest whim of women cyclists is to have their wheels painted to match their dress. In the London streets are seen cycles in various shades of green, brown and terra cotta. The fashion was started by Lady Warwick, who in summer had her wheel painted white, and who dressed in white from head to foot.

In a wealthy family of Vienna the husband made his wife a new year's gift of a dozen pair of gloves. Indignant at such stinginess, the lady, as soon as her husband's back was turned, flung the gloves into the fire. Explanations ensued at table; and what was the irascible lady's astonishment on learning that each pair of gloves was wrapped up in a bank note for 100 florins!

A lady traveler in Thibet gives the following recipe for tea as made in that country: "For six persons, boil a tea-cupful of tea in three pints of water for ten minutes, with a heaping dessert-spoonful of soda; put the infusion into the churn, with one pound of butter and a small tablespoonful of salt. Churn until the combination is as thick as cream." She adds that Thibetans prize butter for its age—forty, fifty, or even sixty years old!

An old bachelor was rather taken aback a day or two since, as follows: Picking up a book, he exclaimed, upon seeing a wood cut representing a man kneeling at the feet of a woman, "Before I would ever kneel to a woman, I would encircle my neck with a rope and stretch it." And then turning to a young woman, he inquired—"Do you not think it would be the best thing I could do?" "It would undoubtedly be the best for the woman," was the sarcastic reply.

It is said that when artists are seeking for models, the palm for beauty and symmetry of figure is given to the girls of Spain, while the daughters of rural Ireland are a good second. The prettiest faces and most graceful throats are found among American maidens. A model for a perfect arm would be sought for among Grecian ladies, while a lady of the Turkish harem would be regarded as the possessor of a daintily commendable hand. Italians are usually good in figure, and some of the most beautiful models, perfectly proportioned, are derived from the women of sunny Italy.

A clover pillow is one of the latest novelties in the ever-changing world of fashion. The red clover must be at its fullest when picked for the pillow. Take as many blossoms as would fill a large wash tub, sprinkle a pound of fine table salt over them and stir them well about once a day, until they are thoroughly dried, without falling to pieces. This is the filling for a pillow made of white linen duck, embroidered with a straggling design of clover, coming from one corner pretty well toward the centre, and letters irregularly arranged, forming some suitable sentiment. A pretty one is: "Shake me well; then turn me over. And may your dreams be as sweet as clover."

Masculinities.

It is well enough to have a nurse, but do not forget that a baby needs a mother.

A Roane county, Tenn., man lit the fuse of a stick of dynamite, lay down on it and waited until he was blown into shreds.

A man in Republic county, Kan., fired eleven shots at some decoy ducks before he discovered they were not the genuine article.

A wife has no business sewing for the heathen when her husband wears a heavy long tailed coat in summer to avoid embarrassment.

There is a man in Brunswick, Me., who steals the electric lights in front of stores. He grasps the wires and yanks them out by the roots.

J. B. Darnell, of Odessa, Ky., owns a mule 34 years of age. The old animal is still hale and hearty, and can shake as lively a leg as when 10 years old.

Among the Kondeh people, who live on Lake Nyassa, in Africa, the favorite form of suicide is to enter the water and allow one's self to be devoured by a crocodile.

According to the latest official statistics Herr Krupp, the gunmaker of Essen, is the wealthiest Prussian subject. He pays taxes on a declared income of nearly $1,800,000.

Daniel Baugh, of Jeffersonville, Ind., is 107 years of age. He celebrated his birthday last week by a dinner, at which six generations of the family were seated at the table.

It is said that on an inquest held in London recently twelve of the fourteen jurymen who inquired into the death of a man named Robinson were named Smith; the remaining two were named Jones and Brown.

The influence of women is making itself felt in Kansas, where a judge has held that if a man calls upon a girl regularly and takes her to the entertainments now and then, he is legally betrothed to her.

Judge Arthur Dale, of Wichita, Kan., has broken the divorce record. He gave a decree exactly 25 seconds after the case was presented to him. There were just 23 words taken, and no questions were propounded.

Oliver Caswel, a blind and deaf mute, to whom Dickens devoted several pages of his "American Notes," died recently at Conanicut, R. I. When Dom Pedro visited Newport some years ago he sent for Caswel and presented him with a gold souvenir.

The Prince of Wales does not take so much interest in his wardrobe as he did some years ago. He is still one of the dressed men in the world, and his influence on men's fashions is as great as it ever was; but those who have charge of his attire complain that he has lost his old enthusiasm on the subject of dress.

Japanese army officers have been studying the effect of the Christian religion on the morals of their troops, and a Japanese paper says that they have concluded that "Christianity is most beneficial in its effect upon the soldiers, as it abolishes the fear of death in the field and makes the men behave better in every way."

Lincoln was the first occupant of the White House to wear a beard, and Grant was the first to wear a mustache. It was, up to the time of Lincoln, considered gross and unclean to wear either beard or mustache. Lincoln had no mustache. Cleveland has a moderate mustache, and is the only one of the Presidents to wear a mustache without a beard.

Miss Darida Harper, daughter of President Harper, of the University of Chicago, was recently initiated as a member of the Esoteric Club, the women's secret society of the university. One of her grotesque requirements was to push around the campus a little red wheelbarrow containing a diminutive yellow dog and a choice collection of disabled dolls.

Professor Rudolph Falb, of Vienna, announces that the earth will come into collision with a comet on November 13, 1899. The earth itself will survive the shock, but every living thing will be choked with poisonous gases and be finally cremated. It may be well to remark that the same professor predicted that in September, 1894, California would be wrenched from the mainland and New York City submerged in the Atlantic Ocean.

It is a curious and little known fact that most of the bookkeepers and cashiers employed in Japanese business houses are Chinamen, who are given the preference for such positions because of their honesty. It is said that a Chinaman will cheat if he gets a chance, but if entrusted with money he keeps it safely. The manager of a Hong Kong bank declared recently, after forty years of active business life, that he had never known of a Chinese defaulter.

The tea used in the immediate household of the Emperor of China is treated with the utmost care. It is raised in a garden surrounded by a wall, so that neither man nor beast can get anywhere near the plants. At the time of the harvest those collecting these leaves must abstain from eating fish, that their breath may not spoil the aroma of the tea; they must bathe three times a day, and, in addition, must wear gloves while picking the tea for the Chinese Court.

Latest Fashion Phases.

Every variety of flower which nature has produced, and many others which must have originated in the fertile brain of the flower maker, are in conspicuous evidence, and flower bonnets are shown among the newest hats. The flower toque is very becoming, and hats with brims have small bunches of violets almost entirely covering the brim and crown, with the addition of tulle to heighten them. Flower bonnets are pretty combinations of violets, roses and foliage, and mignonette is often added. One pretty bonnet of pale green straw has a jet bow in front, a "cachepeigne" of ivy leaves and berries, and an aigrette of green and black bird of paradise plumes, and pink and yellow roses on either side. Paradise feathers are one of the revivals of fashion, and they are seen on the larger hats, falling away from either side of the crown, making the effect of the width very apparent. Panama straws are worn, and one, very daintily trimmed, has plaitings of black and white tulle standing up around the crown and covering the brim, with a finish of white roses and leaves at the back.

Another fancy in hat trimming is to have bows of wide ribbon matching the straw in color, tulle of the same tint, and contrast in the color of the flowers only. A hat with a double brim of biscuit-colored straw has round the edge a ruche of horsehair lace ornamented with cream applique lace, and jet, purple and pink flowers decorate the back and three feathers stand up from the crown. Dress bonnets are made of tulle and lace—very light and airy little trifles as to material, but larger than those worn last season—and mock jewels of every tint are used for trimming. One of the prettiest bonnets has a diadem of emerald and small rhinestones and a group of black and green quills at one side. Black and white dress bonnets, with plenty of jewels in the trimming, are especially fashionable this season. One of the exceptions in millinery is the broad-brimmed hat, with a band of velvet and bandeaux of roses underneath the brim, a bunch of black tips and another band of velvet around the crown. This is tied under the chin with ribbon strings.

Nothing delights the eye as colors, properly harmonized, while nothing jars on a sensitive organization as much as ill-assorted tints. The employment of color has its foundation in philosophical laws, for certain shades in close proximity to other tints partake somewhat of their quality, either raising or lowering their tone.

Above all, should the woman who values her appearance study the proper application of color to dress. The reason that dark red is becoming to brunettes is because it whitens the skin by contrast. Yellow, especially the dark rich shades, is flattering to olive skinned women, as it causes them to seem fairer by contrast, one tone neutralizing the other.

Deep rose is a difficult color to manage, for under it most dazzling complexions lose their freshness when brought in contact with certain shades of pink.

Violet should never be worn by women with muddy skins, as it emphasizes the yellow in their complexion; it is adapted to both brunettes and blondes with a high color, as it tones them down.

While the delicate shades of blue, such as forget-me-not, sky blue and turquoise, are eminently becoming to fair women, they are not flattering to dark ones. Dark blue may be safely worn by blondes and brunettes.

Green is par excellence the color of fair, spiritual-looking women. It should not, however, be donned by those with too pallid cheeks, as it accentuates their pallor; green, however, the most trying shades, may be safely adopted, provided a little lace or frill intervenes, which accentuates all other tones.

Dead white is exceedingly trying, and only becomes persons with lovely pink-tinted complexion. Cream and ivory white can be more safely worn. These white materials look well on blonde and brunette alike, as they take on to themselves the vaporous gray tones, due to the transmission of light.

Black, while universally worn, is not always becoming, and an all black gown is apt to age a woman and bring out facial defects. However, black, especially velvet twill and chiffon, are likely to be becoming to persons, especially in conjunction with a touch of color. Some women with fair complexions become brilliant when in conjunction with unrelieved black.

There seems to be no question about the importance of the bustle this season, notwithstanding the feeling in Paris. Bustles are now displayed prominently in all the corset departments, dozens being sold each day. There are two styles, which are the favorite sellers, the 27-inch haircloth bustle, which is flounced part way, resembling somewhat the old-time Grecian bend. These are designed principally to be worn with summer gowns. The other style is the small haircloth bustle, with hip extension, such is a novelty. This latter style seems a necessary addition to the costume of the day, not only as a preventive toward keeping the heavy skirts from drooping at the sides, but also in aiding the jackets, which are made with flaring skirts, to fit the better.

Immense Empire bows of satin, with buckles of sparkling Irish diamonds in the centre, with a small basketful of vari-colored roses, violets, heartsease, daffodils, etc., are set upon round hats of black, green, brown or pale mauve straw. Other larger Alsatian bows of brilliantly colored ribbon have a lace edge along the selvage side of the loops. Lace rosettes and ruches, with a thick drum major aigrette of airy feathers set at one side, complete the trimming.

Pompadour brocades, satin-striped peau de soie, or flowered Liberty silks are being made up into lovely evening toilets for the summer. Some have an elegantly hung skirt, with waist entirely of lace, or there is a round waisted bodice of plain satin hooked up the back, and draped and decorated on the front and shoulders with lace and insertion trimmed ruffles of the satin.

Jacket bodices are in great variety. They are mostly short and very pert looking about the waist and hips. The basque portion is cut scant or very full, in rounded circular form, or in Vandykes as the figure of the wearer requires, and the bodices are made of every sort of material from velvet and satin to wash silk and gingham. Full round waists are still largely patronized by slender women, but there are many waists cut in points for those inclined to stoutness, and it is to be hoped that women thus formed will be wise enough this summer to adopt this bodice rather than the belted round one, which made such very grotesque spectacles of hundreds of weighty women a year ago.

Golf cloth is a fabric that is used both for costumes and capes. These goods have a genuine Highland accent, with their heather mixtures of color and pretty checks and plaided patterns. In silk and wool mixtures the price for these stuffs is rather high, but the goods are wide. In fine all-wool materials they cost about as much as similar textiles of different weave and pattern. The cravenette goods are finding a large sale this year for traveling, golfing, tennis, outing, and cycling costumes. These goods are undeniable waterproof, and therefore prove invaluable for wear both by mountain, stream and sea. With a cape and cap or toque en suite, the wearer of a cravenette costume is equipped for any sort of tour minus her cumbersome umbrella, and for protection against the sun she has now to carry but the lightest of zephyr-weight parasols.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

To remove a refractory screw from wood heat a piece of iron red hot and hold it on top of the screw for a minute or two; then the screw-driver will easily take out the screw if used while the screw is warm.

The cleanest way to drive water bugs or roaches from bureau drawers or closed shelves is to sprinkle powdered borax over and around the shelves and cover with clean paper.

Keep a bowl of oatmeal on the wash stand, and after washing the hands dry them in the meal. The skin will be kept white and smooth, and less liable to chap by this process.

Kerosene oil is the best of furniture polishes. It cleanses, makes a fine polish and preserves from the ravages of insects.

Half a teaspoonful of sugar will nearly always revive a dying fire, and it is always a safe thing to use for this purpose.

Do not mend a kid glove with sewing silk, for the silk cuts the kid and shows the mend more plainly, while fine cotton thread gives a much more satisfactory result. If a glove is torn put a piece of silk of corresponding shade under the torn part, baste carefully so as not to reveal the stitches on the right side, and then draw up the rent with cotton thread.

To decorate a grate that is not required for use place in it some small pots containing ferns. Collect small fir cones, varnish them and throw around in the grates, so the pots shall be hidden.

If you possess a cosy corner with a shelf at the top have a zinc trough made to fit it, and fill this with some hard foliage and flower plants. They will last a long time and add greatly to the beauty of the room.

Delicate white laces may be cleaned by laying them smooth on wrapping paper and covering them with magnesia. Put another paper over this and place them between the leaves of a book for several days. Brush out the white powder and the lace will be found to be as fresh as when new.

Tarragon Sauce.—To prepare tarragon sauce, put into a saucepan a large half-pint of any fine, delicate gravy. After it has boiled five minutes, add, when in season, a handful of fresh, green tarragon leaves minced and moistened with a generous quantity of cider vinegar. Add this to the gravy and let it simmer five minutes. Serve with any species of boiled poultry. The fresh leaves of the tarragon plant are in perfection in July and August, and impart a piquant flavor to soups, hashes, gravies, salads, etc. A teaspoonful of leaves minced is boiled in the dish to be flavored. To preserve tarragon half fill a quart glass jar, and fill it up with cider vinegar. Cover it closely, and let the tarragon infuse for a week, shaking the jar every day. Then pour off that vinegar carefully, and throw away the leaves that were steeped in it. After washing the jar, put in the same quantity of tarragon leaves, and fill up with the same vinegar before infused. The tarragon plant is easily cultivated, even in a small city yard, and is the chief ingredient of French mustard. To make an exceedingly fine mustard: Into a gill, or two large wineglasses, of the tarragon vinegar—strained from the leaves—mix with an equal quantity of salad oil, stirring well together; mix in thoroughly two ounces of mustard seed pounded into a powder; add one clove of peeled, minced and pounded garlic. When done, cork and seal the mixture tightly in pots or bottles, or a large jar.

Eggs New York Style.—Boil six eggs one-half hour, drop into cold water, shell and quarter. Place in buttered baking dish holding about three pints. Prepare a white sauce as follows: Heat one pint of milk, melt in a sauce pan one tablespoon butter, stir into the butter two tablespoons (rounded) flour, add one quarter of the hot milk and stir vigorously till the mixture is a smooth paste. The remainder of the milk may be added at three separate times, stirring in each addition till it is smoothly blended. Season with one-half teaspoon salt and one-quarter teaspoon white pepper. Chop two large cold boiled onions: stir onions into the sauce and pour over the eggs. Sprinkle over the top one-half cup cracker crumbs, moisten in one tablespoon melted butter, add two tablespoons grated cheese for a top layer and bake in a hot oven about fifteen or twenty minutes until crumbs and cheese are slightly brown.

Sweet Muffins.—One-half cup butter rubbed to a cream. One half cup sugar stirred into the butter. Add two well-beaten eggs. Stir and mix thoroughly. Add one cup sweet milk and three and three quarter cups winter wheat flour. Three rounded teaspoons baking powder should be sifted into the flour after measuring, and the flour and baking powder sifted together into the muffin mixture. Bake in gem pans about twenty-five minutes.

Banked Salmon.—Place a can of salmon after opening in hot water. Let it remain until heated through. Peel and quarter about six large potatoes. When boiled, add one tablespoon butter, one tablespoon salt, half a saltspoon pepper and milk or cream to moisten. Mash and beat with fork till light and creamy. While potatoes are boiling prepare a white sauce like that given above for the eggs. Drain the liquor from the salmon, break it into flakes with a fork and arrange in the middle of a platter. Heap the hot mashed potatoes around the salmon and pour over all the white sauce. Garnish edges of platter with bits of parsley.

Fruit Pin Wheels.—Roll out pie crust thin and cut into strips, about three inches wide and six or eight inches long; spread with marmalade, peach butter or thick jam or firm jelly; roll up, fasten the edges firmly and bake in a quick oven; when sliced across the little spirals are very pretty.

Fruit Jelly—First make plain lemon jelly, adding sugar according to the fruit to be used. When beginning to set add one orange, one banana and two or three figs cut in small pieces. Serve plain or with whipped cream.

The Weak

The Diseased

MADE STRONG AND HEALTHY

THROUGH

DR. RADWAY'S

Sarsaparillian Resolvent

Every drop of the Sarsaparillian Resolvent communicates through the Blood, Sweat, Urine and other fluids and juices of the system the vigor of life; for it repairs the wastes of the body with new and sound material. Scrofula, Consumption, Syphilis, uncured and badly treated Venereal in its many forms, Glandular Disease, Ulcers in the Throat, Mouth, Tumors, Nodes in the Glands and other parts of the system, Sore Eyes, Strumous discharges from the Ears, and the worst forms of Skin Diseases, Eruptions, Fever Sores, Scald Head, Ringworm, Saltrheum, Erysipelas, Acne, Black Spots, Worms in the Flesh, Tumors, Cancers in the Womb, and all Weakening and Painful Discharges, Night Sweats, Loss of Sperm, and all wastes of the Life Principle are within the curative range of this Wonder of Modern Chemistry, and a few days' use will prove to any person using it for either of these forms of disease its potent power to cure them. If the patient, daily becoming reduced by the wastes and decomposition that are continually progressing, succeeds in arresting these wastes, and repairs the same with new material made from healthy blood, and this the Sarsaparillian will and does secure, a cure is certain, for when once this remedy commences its work of purification and succeeds in diminishing the loss of wastes its repairs will be rapid, and every day the patient will feel himself growing better and stronger, the food digesting better appetite improving and flesh and weight increasing.

SCROFULA FROM BIRTH.

Dr. Radway: Dear Sir—It is with pleasure I take my pen in hand to inform you of the great cure effected by your medicine called Sarsaparillian Resolvent. I have a girl three years old last September who has suffered with scrofula ever since she was two years old. In fact, the doctor told us she was born with it. We had our best local doctors with her, and it seemed like all hope was gone, for they told us if the disease settled on her lungs she could not be cured. This frightful disease seated or seized upon her lungs severely. I began to think that our little girl could not live long, our physician's medicines doing no good. In the meantime I received a copy of your medical publication called "False and True," which you sent me. After seeing the accounts of so many cures affected by your treatments, I at once resorted to them, though I could scarcely find any in this country, but I had the luck to get one bottle, and by the time she used it all she was most well. The ulcers that were making their appearance on her body are entirely gone, her lungs almost healed, or at least she has almost quit coughing. She has begun on second bottle and I believe by the time she uses all of it she will be well. She had a very bad cough. If I could have secured this treatment in time I could have saved money by it, but it is a hard matter to get hold of it in this country. I am yours with respect,

SAMUEL S. BARKER,
Flat Top, Mercer Co., W. Va.

FEMALE COMPLAINT.

Mrs. B——, from a continual drain on her system, wasted away from 165 pounds to 75 pounds in the course of 14 months. She had used barks, iron, sulphuric acid, quinine and many of the much vaunted nostrums of the day, as well as all kinds of injections, and still grew worse. She commenced the use of RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT. In one month she gained in weight 10 pounds. Day after day she witnessed an increase of flesh and decrease of waste of Leucorrhea. In two months she was entirely cured of the Leucorrhea, and in six months had gained FIFTY POUNDS IN WEIGHT. She is now in the possession of health and beauty. Let all sick ladies take the SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT.

SKIN DISEASES. HUMORS AND SORES

There is no remedy that will cure the sufferer of Salt Rheum, Ring Worm, Erysipelas, St. Anthony's Fire, Tetters, Rash, Pimples, Blotches, Prickly Heat, Ache and Sores, Ulcers, Boils, Humors of all kinds, so quick as the SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT. Let it be tried.

THE MOST ECONOMICAL! THE BEST!

One bottle contains more of the active principle of medicine than any other preparation. Taken in teaspoonful doses, while others require five or six times as much. Sold by druggists. Price $1.

Send to DR. RADWAY & CO., 55 Elm Street, New York, for Book of Advice.

Recent Book Issues.

"Me an' Methuselar, and other Epi sodes," is a nicely printed and bound book, by Harriet Ford. The various episodes are quite original in idea and dramatic in treatment. They describe various life experiences at various places, with different characters of people, in a way that makes the volume very interesting reading. Published by the Peter Paul Book Company, Buffalo. For sale by Coates & Co.

"An Engagement," by Sir Robert Peel, the latest issue of the series of Bijou Novels, is a pleasant little love story, whose literary merit and thorough freshness of plot and character, entirely justifies its inclusion among this lot of dainty books. Published by the F. A. Stokes Company, New York. For sale by Coates & Co.

"A Rogue's Daughter" by Adeline Sargeant is a novel that may be specially commenned even in this day of numerous excellent stories. It is not only interesting from its strikingly effective plot or the the manner in which sin is punished and love and virtue get their rewards, but its dramatic effects are unfolded so naturally that it almost seems a transcript of real life. An additional attraction in such a book is the superior paper, print and neat binding. Published by the F. A. Stokes Company New York. For sales by Coates & Co.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

The excellent Pocket Magazine published by the F. A. Stokes Company New York in its May number contains stories by Stanley Weyman, Julia Ward Howe, Stephen Crane and other eminent writers.

"The Eclectic" for April contains numerous interesting and important articles culled from the chief publications of England, and treating of the most advanced themes in the leading lines of modern literary effort. It is a very valuable periodical. Published at New York.

TO-DAY IN JOHANNESBURG.

THE Transvaal and its wonderful cosmopolitan centre Johannesburg are just now of greater interest than ever. Emigration there from all enterprising civilized nations, is still on the increase.

First to get there. The railway journey from Capetown to Johannesburg of about three days is through a seemingly endless, sandy country, with range succeeding range of distant mountains, all alike, and strikes a greater sense of vastness and desolation than an expanse of naked ocean itself.

First and second class have sleeping accommodation, the third being kept for emigrants.

Johannesburg, which was nine years ago barren veldt, eight years ago a miners' camp, is now the centre of some one hundred thousand inhabitants, and increasing about as fast as bricks and mortar can be obtained.

It is situated directly on top of the gold, and on looking down from the high ground above, it looks to an English eye like a huge, long-drawn-out mass of tin sheds, with its painted iron mine chimneys running in a straight line all along the quartz gold-reef as far as you can see in either direction.

The largest or main reef runs for thirty miles uninterruptedly, gold bearing and honeycombed with mines throughout. This, even were it alone, could speak for the stability and continued prosperity of the Transvaal gold-trade.

As we enter the town we find fine and well planned streets, crossed at places with deep gutters—gullies rather—to carry off the water, which is often in the heavy summer rains deeper than your knees.

Crossing these at fast trot, the driver never drawing rein, the novice is shot about, in his white covered two-wheeled cab with its large springs, like a pea in a bladder.

Indeed, one marvels at the daintily dressed habitue of the place being swung through similarly, quite unconcerned, and without rumpling a frill.

We pass fine public buildings, very high houses and shops—somewhat jerry-built, it is true, and goodness help them in the event of a large street fire—but now being added to, or replaced by larger and more solid buildings.

Indeed, bricks cannot be made fast enough for the demand, both there and in some of the outlying Transvaal towns where the "gold boom" is on. There are lofty and handsome shops, with most costly contents, which can vie with New York, London or Paris.

Let us watch from the high raised stoep outside the post office, looking down over the huge market square. What strikes us first are the two-wheeled two-horsed cabs with white hoods, restlessly driven by Malays in the inseparable red fez, and these with the fast-trotting mule or horse wagons show the pace at which business or pleasure is followed.

As a contrast comes the lumbering ox-wagon with ten or twelve span of oxen, a little Kaffir boy dragging and directing the leading couple by a thong round the horns, and the unamiable Dutch farmer revolving around, swearing, and using his fifteen foot whip to keep the concern in motion at all.

Then passes a body of some two hundred prisoners, Kaffirs and a few whites leading, marched in fours by some dozen white-helmeted police and four or five mounted men, all paraded through the main streets, innocent and guilty alike, to the court-house, and many escaping en route as occasion offers. Well-dressed English men of business, and professional men, women in handsome and dainty costumes, hustle Jews of all degrees of wealth; carelessly dressed miners, and chaps in rags come in from prospecting or up country, with the Dutchman everywhere in his greasy soft felt and blue tattered puggaree, Chinese shopkeepers, Italians, Poles, Germans; whilst outside in the roadways flow a continuous stream of Kaffirs in hats and cast-off clothing of every sort imagination can picture, who are not allowed by law to walk upon the pavement.

Long before daylight the square is full of ox-wagons, some from distances occupying days to traverse; and the buyers of forage, oats, corn, mealie-meal, firewood, poultry, eggs, etc., are busy as soon as they can see.

Here the middle man makes a good profit, often riding far out on the roads to get at the illiterate Dutch farmer before the latter reaches the market. Here is an amusing instance of a bargain recently overheard on the square.

An English trader purchased a wagon load of stuff from a Boer, and by means of a few figures and calculations easily tossed off, and with many flourishes, makes out that the amount he has to pay the Dutchman is about half of what it ought to be, if correctly reckoned up at the price agreed.

"Oom Paul" cannot reckon much, but has a Ready Reckoner, and points to and wants the larger amount.

"What's that?" says the other.

"Let's look at it."

Then, "Why, that's last year's Ready Reckoner! Look here, man, it's marked 1894 It's no good now."

"Allamachta!" says the Boer, "I did not notice that;" and plods off home, wagon and all, content with the lesser sum.

No expense is spared in high living. A special fruit-train is run daily from Natal, and fish is brought enormous distances. All South African fish, however, are either tasteless, or of a milk-and-water or insipid flavor.

The vegetable market opens each morning at dawn; at eight the lots are all sold by auction, Malays pile up their carts and pannier-baskets to sell their stuff from house to house before the mid-day heat.

In England meat is dear, and bread and vegetables cheap: in the Transvaal bread and vegetables are dear (a small roll, not large enough to be dignified with the name of loaf, costing a dime), and meat is cheap. Now let us see what advantages the country has to offer to intending emigrants.

To young fellows going out with a few hundreds to try their luck, the old Australian's advice, I think, holds good for Africa—namely, to put your money into safety for a year, and not go into business or speculate until you know your country.

Johannesburg business morality is certainly not London business morality; and leading business men at the former place will tell you themselves that honesty is not expected there.

For those who go to earn their livelihood, or to make money, I would say, do not go out without a fixed trade or handicraft, or money to start upon or a good introduction to some friend already there. But remember that the Transvaal is a veritable Paradise for the workingman who knows his business.

All the heavy part of the labor is put out; the Kaffirs do it, directed by him in a few Kaffir words, and generally many English expletives.

Wages are paid monthly. Miners make their £125 to £150 a month, if first rate, and the blacks drill their holes for blasting where and as they order them.

Carpenters, blacksmiths, masons can get about the same; and whenever a billet is lost or cannot be obtained, a short tramp along the mines generally brings success.

Vacancies are constantly occurring, for miners, especially when full of money, are inclined to "go on the burst," and their places are ruthlessly filled up (on Monday mornings is the best time to apply) by new-comers, in order to output up to the mark.

A freemasonry exists amongst them, and when one gets into trouble with the authorities, half a dozen turn up to bail him out, or to pay the iniquitously heavy fine imposed by the cunning Dutch officials, who know they will be paid, as the alternative time is too valuable to the delinquent.

The miners, except when close to Johannesburg or a town, live in white men's quarters built of wood and corrugated iron; and the mines succeed one another some few miles apart along the pen veldt or plain, without a tree to break its barrenness, so the surroundings are grim and uninviting enough.

Many miners have horses, many bicycles, the latter just the thing for the long, dry, sandy roads. They feed at a common boarding house for $25 or $30 a month, and sleep two, often four or more, in a small room.

No class ever cared less for personal comforts. They pay highly, as money comes in so easily, and without grumbling. Their relaxation, as is natural in places so monotonous and unlovely, is dissipation, and so a steady man can save a small fortune in an incredibly short space of time.

Most of those incline to save their banking accounts, and very large sums of money are sent monthly to wives and families at home.

The utterly free life of South Africa has such a charm also, that, as all the colonists tell you, if once you put on the veldt schoons (untanned leather shoes) and drink "Cape smoke" (local attempt at brandy), you will never leave the country; and it has a fascination which is believed invariably to attract back to it all who have been there.

FOR COOKING A HUSBAND.—One of the lecturers at a cooking class recently gave this recipe for cooking a husband, which is not commonly found in the books on the culinary art:—

"A good many husbands are utterly spoiled by mismanagement. Some women go about it as if their husbands were balloons, and blow them up.

"Others keep them constantly in hot water, others let them freeze by indifference and carelessness. Some keep them in a stew by irritating ways and words. Others roast them. Some keep them in a pickle all their lives.

"It cannot be supposed that any husband will be tender and good if managed in this way; but they are really delicious when properly treated.

"In selecting your husband, do not go to market for him; as the best are always brought to your door. It is far better to have none, unless you will patiently learn how to govern him.

"See that the linen in which you wrap him is properly washed and mended, with the required number of buttons and strings tightly sewed on. Tie him in a kettle by a strong silk cord called 'comfort,' as the one called 'duty' is apt to be weak.

"They are apt to fall out of the kettle, and to be burned, and crusty on the edges, since, like crabs and lobsters, you have to cook them while alive.

"If he splutters and fusses, do not be anxious. Add a little sugar in the form of what confectioners call kisses, but no vinegar or pepper on any account. A little spice improves them, but it must be used with judgment.

"Do not stick any sharp instrument into him to see if he is becoming tender. Stir him gently, watching the while lest he adheres to the kettle, and so become useless.

"You cannot fail to know when he is done. If this treatment is closely followed, you will find him all the more desirable; but do not be careless with him and keep him in too cool a place."

NOT A FAIRY STORY.—There is a certain Mexican grandee who owns a famous mine of inexhaustible riches in the state Chihuahua. It contains a high grade silver ore, and is so rich that whenever the don runs short of money he simply directs the head peon to gather together his body of twelve or thirteen serfs, and their equally patient and uncomplaining fellow-serfs, the burros, and the procession takes the trail for the family mine, as it is called.

The mine has been in the possession of the don and his ancestors for the past three centuries. It is nothing but a rude tunnel in the mountain side, the entrance to which is barricaded with heavy timber doors, securely locked with three old Spanish locks.

When the mine is reached, the don unlocks the door. The peons are then set to work getting out the rich silver ore, which they put into baskets slung upon the backs of the burros.

It is but the work of five or six hours to get out ore that will be worth some thousands of pounds. The ore is free milling ore, and it is no trouble to work it.

When the baskets are full, the don carefully locks up the mine and seals the entrances, and the cavalcade starts back to Chihuahua, twelve miles away, where the contents of the baskets are sold.

The don owns a magnificent estate, and has a lovely wife and two beautiful daughters, who have all the pride of the true Castilians.

BEGAN WITH TWO COWS.—Berlin has a great milkman of whom the following interesting account is given. Fourteen years ago Herr Bolle, a poor German peasant, came to Berlin with two cows and began selling pure milk.

He met with success at once, and to-day his establishment is the largest in Berlin and one of the largest and best in the world. One thousand men and sixty women are employed by him. In place of two wagons there are now two hundred in his service, and one hundred and fifty horses.

The milk of fifteen hundred cows is used in the business, from sixty to seventy thousand litres being delivered daily. In his buildings and grounds the most immaculate cleanliness prevails.

In one department the milk is sterilized, in another the pure sugar is extracted, to be used for babies' food. So great is the care, that a baby who begins with either morning, noon, or evening milk, receives the same always—every one of the innumerable customers receiving individual care.

The milk is poured into compartments of the spotless carts, which are then locked, and the milk drawn off through faucets, in order to prevent the possibility of adulteration by any dishonest carrier.

The scrupulous care extends even to the homes of the employes, for whom nurses are provided in illness, while schools, halls, fresh air funds, and so on, are organized and sustained by the wise forethought and benevolence of Herr Bolle. The very clothes worn by employes are washed in a model laundry on the grounds.

The proprietor of this vast milking concern is now more than eighty years old, a very short, white haired man. His whole success has been owing to the same honesty and clear-headedness which led him, a poor peasant, to take his two cows to the great capital of Germany and sell "pure milk" in defiance of established custom.

NATURE THE FIRST MECHANIC.—The synapta, a water insect, is provided with an anchor, the exact shape of the anchor used by ships. By means of this peculiar device the insect holds itself firmly in any desired spot.

The nautilus is a natural boat, having the shape of the coracle or fishing boat, formerly used off the coasts of Europe. It has also a sail, by which the little animal is smoothly propelled through the water.

The nemertes, a marine animal, is an angler and a net combined. This singular creature has a ribbon-like structure, only an eighth of an inch thick, but from twenty to ninety feet in length.

The insect known as the water boat-man has a regular pair of oars, his legs being used as such. He swims on his back, as in that position there is less resistance to his progress.

The first clock maker was the weaver bird, which, from threads and vegetable filaments, manufactured a fabric quite waterproof, and of very dense structure.

In the ant hills of South Africa have been found suspension bridges passing from one gallery to another and spanning a gulf more than six inches wide.

The first needle was the bill of the tailor bird, which sews together leaves in order to make its nest and form a shelter over its young.

Humorous.

A DOUBLE REASON.

Miss Parade and Miss Beach
Go so much with each other
Not for friendship, but each
Has an unmarried brother.

Oversight—An eyebrow.

A singular thing—A bachelor.

Cheap country seat—A stump.

Speaks for itself—The phonograph.

A straight tip—That on a lightning rod.

Is Death's door opened with a skeleton key?

Explosion of feeling—Popping the question.

Where to go when short of money—Go to work.

The man on the fence expects to save himself by a hedge.

A skilful driver—One who knows how to drive a bargain.

It is difficult for a drinking man to hold his breath; it is generally too strong for him.

A portion of the roof of a lunatic asylum was blown off the other day. Evidently unsound in the upper stories.

The young lady who wanted her sweetheart close at hand, explains it on the ground that 'twas only a nigh dear of her own.

"It's a toss up whether I reach the fence or not," panted the fat man as he felt the bull's horns toying about the region of his coat tails.

Over the grave of the Cannibal King they inscribed, with trenchant pen, this epitaph: "Write me down as one who loved his fellow-men."

Irate father: I'm going to put a check to your extravagance, sir!

Impudent son: All right! Give me the check.

Wife: In the game of lawn tennis, my dear, what is the most difficult thing to acquire?

Husband: The lawn.

"Good heavens! what's the matter?"

"Hurt in a railway accident."

"Collision?"

"Yes; kissed the wrong woman in a tunnel."

Tom: You would marry the greatest fool in the world if he asked you, wouldn't you?

Edith: Oh, Tom, this is so sudden!

Hoax: Does Silicus know anything about music?

Joax: No, he doesn't know the difference between a string orchestra and a rubber band.

"Are you feeling better?" she asked in tremulous tones.

"Well, I'm able to get around," he replied, as his strong, right arm dallied with her sylph like waist.

"And who is this?" asked aunt Clara, pointing to the picture of a chubby child in skirts.

"That," said Robby, who had been wearing trousers for some, "is me when I was a girl."

Business man: You vagabond! You sent in word that you would see me on business, and when I ask what your business is, you beg.

Vagabond: But you forget, sir, begging is my business.

Fond parent: Here are two sixpences for you, Bobby, to put in your little bank.

Bobby: I'd rather have a shilling, if you've got it, pa.

Fond parent: What for?

Bobby: 'Cos it won't go through the hole.

"How many years have you been dumb?" sympathetically asked a gentleman of a beggar who pretended to be bereft of speech.

"Five years, sir," replied the impostor, completely taken off his guard.

Commuter: What do you mean by saying that house is only five minutes from the station? It's fifteen minutes if it's a second.

Real estate dealer: When I said five minutes, I supposed you had a bicycle.

A very peculiar effect was produced by the following announcement contained in the advertisements of a country fair—"Among other attractive features of this great fair there will be highly amusing donkey races. Competition in these two contests open to inhabitants of the county only."

"What ever became of that fellow Tom Perkins? He was a man of most imposing presence."

"Yes, he was——"

"Ought to have had command of an army, it always seemed to me. Such physique! such a magnificent head! and his carriage was superb."

"Wasn't it? He's with Higgins, Jones & Hickleberry—department store, you know."

"Indeed! Partner?"

"No. Floor walker. He attracts custom, and his generalship helps him to keep shoppers in order."

WEALTH IN CANINES.—The wars of the Constantinople street dogs are eminently satisfactory from the point of view of the inquirer into animal politics.

Theoretically, they are complete examples of what the rational warfare of animals ought to be, but usually is not.

It has for object either defence or conquest of territory, not the mere plundering instinct, or that primitive desire for making a meat dinner off an enemy which occasionally suggests an attack on weaker neighbors to the cannibals of the Congo.

This civilized and rational warfare of the Constantinople dogs is due to their territorial instinct. Certain streets and quarters belong to the particular dog communities, which again subdivide their territory among individuals.

In some streets each heap of refuse, on to which the common rubbish of a group of houses is thrown, belongs to one dog, who lies on it, brings up its puppies on it, and looks on it as his home.

"There were three sweet families in one street," according to the account of a lady who recently visited Constantinople, and through its dogs the most interesting native inhabitants.

If food became scarce in the next dog "parish," an invasion is planned into a richer neighborhood, where the rubbish heaps—the Turkish equivalent for dust bins—of a wealthier class of inhabitants promise to yield better results.

All the dogs of the invaded territory at once muster for resistance, and the fight, which is not organized, but of the rough and tumble order, goes on until the victory declares itself for one side or the other, or until the inhabitants step out and stone the packs till they separate.

Not unfrequently a street or two are annexed by the invaders; more often the defence is successful. This is always conducted by a levy en masse, even the puppies join in the fray. It is observed that it is only serious invasion which causes the dogs to fight.

A single dog may pass through a strange quarter provided he gives himself no airs, but lies down on his back and sticks up his feet with proper deference and humility whenever the owners of the street come up to expel him.

According to Turkish tradition, these street-dogs were once most successful in warfare, for their ancestors fought and beat Satan.

Their story is that when man first appeared on earth, and Satan drew near to kill him, the dogs attacked and drove away the arch enemy, and preserved the first man.

Hence, when a Turk has broken some minor ordinance of the Koran, he often buys a few loaves of bread, and stepping out into the road, throw them in a dignified manner—not as an American would throw them—to the dogs of the street.

No vertebrate animals show the same organization for wars of plunder and defence, as the baboons, or the territorial instinct of the street-dogs; but there are several species which exhibit these instincts in a minor degree, and in some cases act under the orders of officers.

The troops of wild horses of America are led by the master stallion; when attacked by pumas, or expecting to be "stamped" by another troop, they are said to form a ring, with the mares and foals inside.

The pack of "red-dogs" in the Indian hills follow the lead of old hounds, probably because their skill in scenting is more accurate.

The Indian wolves have been observed to divide forces, part keeping the dogs in check, while others attack the sheep.

STORY OF A DOCTOR AND A MONKEY.—The wife of a celebrated Western divine has such a fancy for Angora cats that she has a room devoted to them, leading out of which a gallery is built, so the animals can have exercise and fresh air without wandering away.

An old college friend met the doctor on the street lately, and, not having seen each other for some years, the meeting was most pleasant. At last he asked—

"George, what are you doing now?"

"Well," said he, "I am married, am pastor of a fine church, and get a good salary."

"And your wife?"

"My wife! my wife! oh, she is in the cat raising business!"

In addition to the cat craze, a monkey was added to the household menagerie, and all went pleasantly until one day, as the doctor stepped into his bath, the monkey jumped in with him.

Then there was wrath in the old man's eye, when, after a brief struggle, he left the bath tub, holding the monkey by the neck, both dripping with water, marched into the presence of his good lady, saying—

"Madam, this monkey business has gone too far; you must decide between me and the monkey!"

She looked placidly up from a cat she was petting, saying,—

"Will you give me twenty-four hours to decide, doctor?"

The monkey is still a member of the household.

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No. 4. Over the crown of the head.	No. 4. From ear to ear round the forehead.

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MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER.
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
Nov., 29, '88. Norwich, Norfolk, England.

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LEONARD MYERS.
Ex-Member of Congress, 6th District.

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